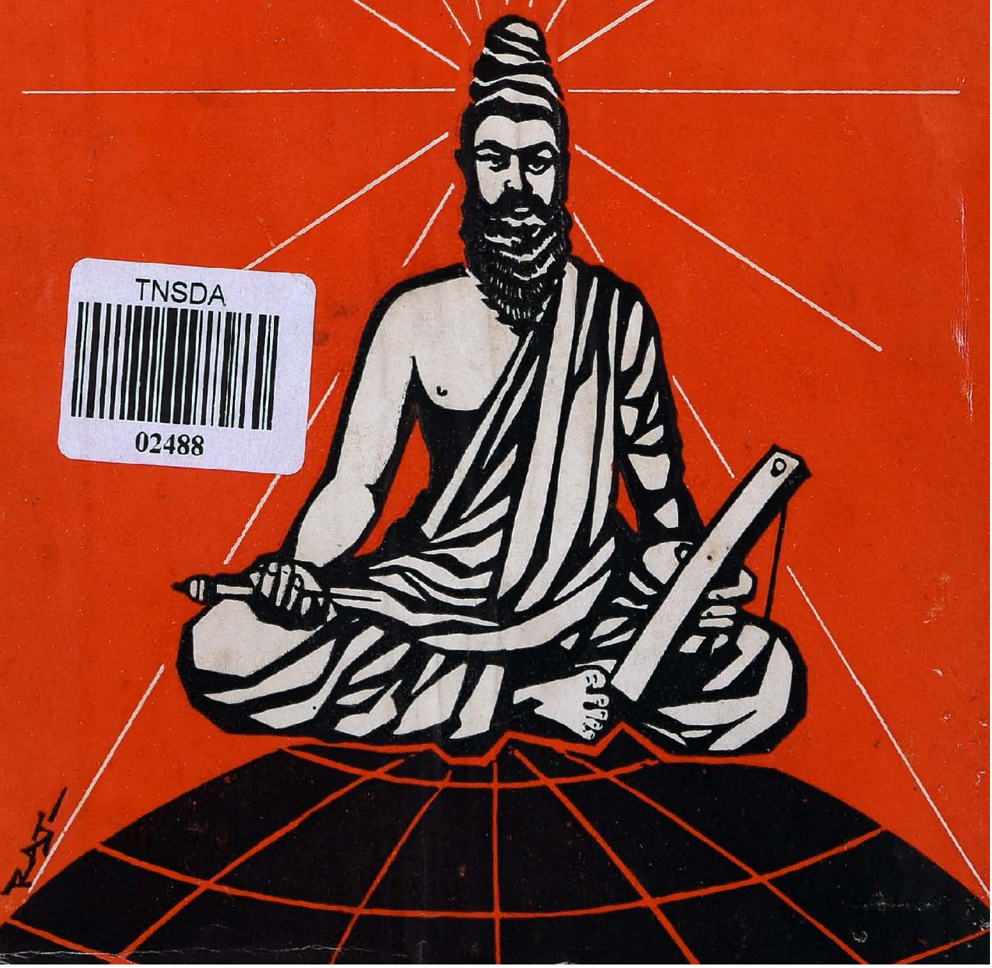
RELIGION OF TIRUKKURAL

Dr MUTHURAMAN



Foreign Price:
U. S. A. — One dollar
U. K. — Six shillings

RELIGION OF TIRUKKURAL

by

M. MUTHURAMAN, M.A., Ph.D.,
Professor of Philosophy
Pachaiyappa's College
Madras - 30.

 [*Price Rs.* 5

First Published : January—1969.

For copies write to

Dr. M. MUTHURAMAN, M.A., Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy
Pachaiyappa's College
Madras - 30
South India.

Published by : Dr. M. Muthuraman, M.A., Ph.D.
Pachaiyappa's College, Madras-30.
Printed by : United Printers, 3/27, Broadway Madras-1.

NON - ENVYING

Tiruvalluvar has already spoken of the importance of the purity of heart for the realisation of the best things in life. However, in the family order of life led by the house-holder, it is most likely that he could meet with practical problems and difficult situations. That kind of an atmosphere may lead to entertain enmity towards others. It is in that perspective, Tiruvalluvar brings home to us of the dangerous consequences of entertaining this potential vice, enmity. For the Tamil sage reminds us when one's heart is filled with enmity, no other external enemy is necessary for his fall, for the inherent enemy itself shall bring that without failing.[170] Tiruvalluvar further says that when it is known of an householder's envious designs the goddess of wealth deserts him and sends her sister, the goddess of poverty to dwell with him.[171] Through this homely observation, the Tamil sage reveals only the traditional views of the ancient Tamils. As a matter of fact, even in our times, we hear this kind of views particularly from the orthodox Hindu families. Thus it is envy that paves the way to a man's ruin, and plunges him into the fires of poverty-stricken life on earth.[172]

The dangerous consequences of entertaining enmity are not only confined to the individual sufferings but it extends to his childern as well. This is why, Tiruvalluvar warns, be not envious of the charities done unto others, lest your children should be the victims, of the trails and tribulations of life.[173] Thus having summed up the resultant hazards and hardships of an envious heart, the Tamil sage puts the question: Could an envious heart ever dream of honour or wealth?[174] The simple answer is 'certainly not'. Therefore entertaining enmity at heart is nothing but a deliberate act of committing suicide. This is

"A truly religious person becomes a citizen of the world, but the service of one's own country is the stepping-stone, to the service of humanity. And where service is rendered to the country consistently with the welfare of the world, it finally leads to self-realisation."

MAHATMA GANDHI.

PREFACE

I thank God for having enabled me to write and publish a part of the sacred work of Tirukkural. I am publishing this book with the purpose of introducing Saint Tiruvalluvar to college students. I have attempted in this book only a part of the whole work of Tirukkural. As my endeavour is to present in a comprehensive manner only those ideas related to the family order of life, so I have avoided to include other details mentioned in Tirukkural. However, I have not ignored consistency in the hope of maintaining comprehensiveness. I trust that the present handbook shall guide, the younger generations of our times, in the proper directions for making their lives purposive and meaningful.

In the first chapter the reader is introduced briefly to the cultural life of the ancient Tamils. As a sort of background, from the available data of research works, I have set in this form. In the second chapter, a general account of the basic principles of Tirukkural is setforth. Therein references are made to specific events that took place in the life of Tiruvalluvar. Then the Tamil literary tradition of paying respects and adoration to the Supernatural, Natural and the Moral forces are summed up. The third chapter is the major part of this book. Therefore, all the recommended virtues for the house-holder are described. In the fourth chapter is described the glory of the ascetic order of life. Only as a principle of maintaining consistency, I have placed the ascetic order, after the exposition of family order of life. In the fifth and final chapter, I have presented the message of Tiruvalluvar to mankind.

I record my profound feelings of indebtedness to Dr. M. Varadarasan, whose Tamil publication, Tirukkural Telivurai — inspired me to undertake the present publication. To confess the truth, Professor Varadarasan's publication of Tirukkural has remained with me for the past two decades! For so much of inspiration derived from Tirukkural, I express my debt of gratitude once again to Dr. M. Varadarasan.

I record my gratefulness to the late Professors R. P. Sethu Pillai and A. Aranganatha Mudaliar for their lucid interpretations of the couplets in English. For the pioneering research works made in Ancient Tamil Culture by scholars like V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar and others, I am equally grateful. With pleasure, I thank Thiru N. Subbiah B.A., B.L., for his goodwill. My thanks are also due to the United Printers and the Rass Printers for their fine works executed within a short-time.

The Year 1969 is an auspicious one for two important reasons. Firstly, we are celebrating the birth centenary of the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Secondly, we are honouring Saint Tiruvalluvar, perhaps after the lapse of nearly two thousand Years! In my humble way, I dedicate this book of the great Soul of ancient India, to the memory of the great Soul of modern India, Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi.

Madras,
15—1—'69.

DR. MUTHURAMAN.

CONTENTS

RELIGION OF TIRUKKURAL

CHAPTER 1

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ANCIENT TAMILS

Language:

Explaining the basic unity of all Indian languages, Dr. Nagendra makes a special reference to the antiquity of Tamil and Samskrit, with reference to their developments in ancient times.[1] It is pointed out how Tamil is a classical language like the Greek or the Latin languages, while her ancient contemporaries have changed beyond recognition and even some of them have ceased to be the spoken languages; Tamil continues to be one of the most fertile and living languages of modern India. Without an exaggeration, it is mentioned that Tamil is the only ancient language, which is still young and capable of expressing modern ideas in a simpler and clearer manner, so that the benefit reaches the average people at large. As a matter of fact, the ancient development of Tamil is traced from the earliest Tamil grammar, Tolkappiyam. This is the extant Tamil work generally ascribed to a few centuries before the Christian era. However it is worthy to note that Tolkappiyanar himself admits that he is not the first grammarian and thereby quotes his predecessors, thus refers in unmistakble terms of the Tamil literary tradition already in existence.[2] Therefore it may be safely stated that in ancient India only two languages had been recognised as the major languages namely Samskrit and Tamil. For their origin, Indian legends and mythological references trace the former to the Samskrit grammarian Panini and the later to the Tamil grammarian Agattiyar, the two earliest known masters in linguistic studies.

Dr. M. Varadarasan explains that in ancient times, in the remote Southern-India, Tamil evolved as a literary dialect

1. Indian Literature by Dr. Nagendra.
2. Tolkappiyam - Porulathikaram-53

known as Sen-Tamil. This was the language in its purity and refinement used by the poets in their literary works. Whereas the spoken dialect was known as Kodum-Tamil used by the mass without much concern either for grammar or for syntax. This spoken dialect is also said to have been modified gradually in course of time due to local, social and political developments. However it may be pointed out in this connection that the literary works like Tirukkural belongs to the category of Sen-Tamil. Apart from this, the Tamil tradition, particularly of the literary tradition believes that Tamil language had its beginning in divine revelation. In other words, it is said to have been revealed by Lord Siva. 'Siva revealed to Agattya, the Tamil literature in the beginning.' [3] In the same manner mention is also made of the divine revelation of Samskrit. 'The first Teacher, Siva, is the author of the two languages Tamil and Samskrit.' There is also a tradition according to which Lord Murugan taught Agattiyar the language of Sen-Tamil.

Sangam Literature

As the culture of the ancient Tamils was indigenous to the soil of their life, so also the earliest available literature was mainly due to the influences of geographical conditions. The land was fertile with its hills and perennial rivers, plateaus and green fields stretching to the sea on the east. the west and the south. People lived in harmony with nature. The imaginative bards were inspired to burst into songs of love. Naturalism and romanticism thus were the distinguishing qualities of their songs. It is further explained by Dr. M. Varadarasan[4] according to whom there were poets like Wordsworth, who painted pictures of hills, lakes, rivers and the unsophisticated folks of the land. There were poets like Scott, with apt descriptions of Nature, based on the closest observation that a botonist could acquire correct knowlege of vegetation of the land. Their love of Nature was more powerful than that of their contemporaries, the ancient Greeks, that it penetrated into the nook and corner

3. Sangattamilum Pirkalattamilum-P. 3
by Dr. U. V. SwaminathaIyer.

4. An evaluation of Tamil Literature PP. 7 & 10.
by Dr. M. Varadarasan.

of their themes of love as well as of war in their poems. This blending of feelings in men and women with the grandeur of Nature, the sublime and the subtle had been recognised and maintained as essentials in the literary conventions of the earliest period of Sangam Tamil literature.

As a matter of fact, Sangam[5] is explained as the literary association of poets. Such literary associations though they existed in different parts and cities of the ancient Tamil Nadu, yet that literary association which existed in the Pandyan Kingdom - Madurai alone was called the Sangam. It was looked after by the Pandyan rulers apart from the rulers of Chola and Chera kingdoms. The mention of the names of divinities-Sivan, Vitnu and Murugan as participants of the Sangam, adds to it dignity and divinity. The continuity of Tamil Sangam literature is also explained in triple stages of their existence as follows.[6]

The first flood destroyed the first Sangam at the Southern-Madurai and the second flood destroyed the second Sangam at Kavadapuram, both the cities are said to be submerged in the Indian ocean. The third Sangam existed in the present Madurai. Most of the ancient Tamil writers have mentioned the existence of the Sangam in their works and commentaries. Further evidences are given as follows. [7] In Madurai in the South-Western part of the temple of Lord Somasundaresvara, there is a Sangam temple. In that temple there is an idol of the goddess of learning, accompained by the images of (49) forty-nine Tamil poets. There is also the Siva-lingam. Even at present, there is worship duly conducted everyday. In the Northern street, there is a temple for Nakkirar, the leading poet of the third Sangam. In this temple there are images of other Tamil poets, apart from the image of Nakkirar. What has hitherto been described is an account of the Tamil literary third Sangam. Apart this, it is said that there were such associations for Music and Drama. It is also pointed out that the third Sangam was disrupted and thereby disunited not

5. Sangattamilum Pirkalattamilum-P. 5
6. Ibib-P. 6
7. Ibid-P. 18

by natural calamities but by political changes and social upheavals during the first and second centuries A.D.[8]

With reference to the historical developments of Tamil literature, Dr. M. Varadarasan makes a classification as follows: The third Sangam period 500 B. C. to 200 A. D.; Mediaeval period 600 A. D. to 1200 A. D.; Later period 1200 A. D. to 1750 A. D.; and the Modern period 1750 A. D. to 1950. Thus from the research works of the developments and continuity of Tamil literature, Dr. M. Varadarasan points out that Tamil literature reflects the ancient culture of India in general and of South-India in particular from the early period of 1000 B. C. As a matter of fact, the early Tamil literary works were secular in their expositions as part of them dealt with state, citizenship, war etc., while rest of the works dealt with morals, love in all their subtle and psychological aspects with the realistic background of natural and normal life of the people at large. This is why, only from the literary accounts we are able to know and understand the cultural aspects of the life of Tamils. Even in this perspective we have to be cautious for the following significant reason. For, it is a common phenomenon that the history of learning and knowledge in any country could possibly show a gradual progress and development from small beginnings. Curiously enough, the Tamil Sangam and their voluminous literary works reverse this natural order! In other words, it shows a continuous decadence from the golden age of the first Tamil Academy till we reach the third Academy. This peculiar, if I may say so, unique aspect of Tamil literature needs an impartial investigation along with the sympathetic understanding of their time immemorial literary traditions. In other words, for an understanding of the growth and development of Tamil literature, we could no more apply, modern evolutionary principles which could explain from small beginnings to later developments of greater magnitude. This kind of a scientific explanation does help in knowing the life of animals as well as the physical principles governing therein. But human problems of life, language, culture etc. cannot be scientifically explained of their beginnings. If we try as modern sociologists and others

8. A history of Tamil Literature (250-600 A. D.) by T. V. Sadasiva Pandarathar.

do, then they would explain away the purpose of language, culture etc. This would be the sad plight if we try to explain the genius of Tamil literature. The other alternative accepted mostly by the traditional Tamil scholars and writers is the recognition of divine revelation.

Social Life:

Tolkappiyanar describes how the ancient Tamils distinguished their habitations according to the natural availability of vegetation. They recognised five regions-tinai-known as Kurinji, Neithal, Mullai, Palai and Marutham. Social life in these regions is really an interesting study, provided we bear in mind the unsophisticated life of the ancient Tamils. Though there was similarity in the daily life of the five regions yet they differed from one another in their performance of social activities. Kurinji is the hilly tract of land where Nature enraptures her inhabitants by her ever green, romantic sceneries. With limited territory as well as population, people knowing one another meet freely. Love at first sight is said to be the accepted mode of human relationship and the form of marriage is known as Kalaviyal. Neithal, is the sea-coast region, where the lady passes anxious days and restless nights, expecting the return of her beloved one. Mullai is the pastural region where the separation of lovers for a short period is a source of anxiety and anguish. For the cowherds go with their cattle in search of fertile grounds for grazing and return usually late. Palai is the desert region, where the separation of the lover from his love is inevitable due to the freqent natural calamities. Marutham is the fertile region, where people live the settled life of ease and peace. Here the traditional form of marriage with the consent and authority of parents prevails. It may be pointed out that the refined form of marriage known as Karpiyal could have gained currency in the fertile region of Marutham as there is avenue for settled life and prosperity leading to the establishment of towns and cities.

Ramachandra Dikshitar,[9] points out that the Tamil Sangam Works like Purananuru frequently mentions life of the people in some of the towns and cities renowned at that time. It is said

9. Studies in Tamil Literature and History PP. 259-274 by V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar.

that every city of importance had a strong fortification around. For instance Karuvur had a strong fortification. Outside the fortress were the temples with broad roads adorning both the sides with huge mansions, where lived the pilgrims and the ascetics lived in the Mutts nearby. Between the fortwalls there was a deep moat. The large intervening space between the moat and the walls of the fortress was the defence forest known as Kavarkadu. The walls of the fortress were fully equipped with armed men defended by guards. This gate led on to a number of streets, where the public markets were to be seen. Next to those streets were the other streets of residences for the middle-class workers. Beyond those streets were the streets for Anthanar and yet beyond were the streets for the royal Officers. These particular streets were known as the royal streets-Arasa Veethi. In the heart of the fortress-city, there was the royal palace, contained in the huge mansion consisting of royal hall, dancing hall and the chambers for the various councils. The same description of fortress, containing broad and busy streets is also found in regard to the cities of Madurai as well as Kanchi-puram. It is pointed out that the royal palace was lighted with lamps held by statues of metal made by the Greek and Roman domiciles known as Yavanas. It is said how the oiling of lamps were done and duly supervised by night watchmen. Mention is also made of temples and of their presiding deities. Festivals were periodically conducted in honour of the guardian deities so that the city life of the people might not be affected by calamities through natural or supernatural agencies. There were public restaurants where food and sweetmeats were offered for sale. What is more remarkable is the mention of a museum in the city of Madurai.

As a matter of interest, the social life in the city was adorned especially by women. They attended temples and also took part in the public performances of singing and dancing. They were allowed the freedom to choose their partners of life. The young maidens decked themselves with costly attires and ornaments of gold and pearls and thus enriched the charm of city-life. Their dresses varied according to their positions in the society. It is said that the Tamils knew the manufacturing of clothes of fine texture with borders of different colours. The yarn was

said to be so fine that the texture looked like the skin of the serpent and thin like the smoke. Clothes were largely made up of cotton, while it is said that there were also of wool and silk used. Thus making due allowance for poetic descriptions and fair play of imagination, we cannot escape from the conclusion that the ancient Tamil cities like Madurai, Kanchi and Pukar or Cauverippumpattinam, were well developed and prosperous centres of culture. Trade and commerce prospered. The people were wealthy. Life was enjoyable. The king provided protection and security to his subjects, visitors and travellers.

Such a busy life of the ancient Tamils was not devoid of music and dramas. For we could understand from Iraiyanar Agapporul, a commentary on the traditional account of the Sangam literature, the names of the treatises on music. It is described how there were classes of bards of men and women who were the professional singers and musicians known as Panar and Viraliyar respectively. It is also mentioned that most of them went from place to place displaying their skill through musical performances, thus earned their livelihood as well. In Silappadikaram a chapter as a whole known as canto is devoted to the description of the various aspects of the science of music. In that canto, mention is made of two kinds of performances known as Agakkutthu and Purakkutthu, secular and sacred performances respectively. In addition to that eleven kinds of dances known as Atal are also mentioned. A number of musical instruments are named as well as the requisite qualifications of a musician are also described. The musician known as Isaiyon exhibited his skill either by playing on the musical instruments Veenai or Flute or sang vocally. However in all such cases, it was accompanied by the low toned Mirdangam and similar instruments.

Political Life:

The Sangam Tamil work of Purapporul Venbamalai follows the divisions of society setforth in Tolkappiyam[10]. The people are classified into four groups based on responsibilities. They are Arasar the ruling ciass, Anthanar the priests, Vanikar the merchants and the Velar namely the agriculturists. The art of

10. Tolkappiyam - Porulathikaram 75.

government as evidenced in the works of Purapporul Venbamalai and Purananuru is known to be an advanced form of monarchy. They had a regular army with cavalry and elephant corps. They seem to have known the different ways of fighting the enemy by siege as well as in the open battle-field. They had spies. They had well constructed fortresses and towns as mentioned already, surrounded by deep moats and a line of forest. There were brave warriors who fought fcr their kings. In their deaths in the battle-fields, their names were honoured by erecting tombs for them. The few pieces of ancient Tamil works translated by Dr. G. U. Pope and Mr. J. M. Nallasamy Pillai bear ample testimony to that. It is worthy to mentlon that the first event in case of a war was the capturing of the enemy's cattle. This phenomenon only tells us how even at such a remote period, it was recognised as an act of charity, apart from economic utility to remove those useful animals from the scene of war. It is also pointed out that the invader was equally humane towards the captured, the aged, the infirm, children and women.

Trade and Industry :

With regard to trade and industry of the ancient Tamils, we have to look to the descriptions in the work of Pattinapalai, to grasp the extent of their trade, commerce etc. Southern-India, with her natural ports, was the meeting place, so to speak, of the various prosperous nations of the ancient world. It is explained that the Tamils knew the art of boats and ship building, in addition to their mastery in weaving, dyeing and jewellery in gold and allied metals. They were quite at home in the art of agriculture and irrigation with proper facilities like constructing dams across the perennial rivers of their lands. It may be stated incidentally how interesting it is to note that the well developed agricultural life of the Tamils is described in the mahavamso in the chronicles of ceylon as early as a few centuries before the Christian era.

Art and Sculpture :

With regard to arts, the Tamils possessed all the fine arts including painting and sculpture. The references in the Sangam works to the erection of tombs, known as Veerakkal, put up in honour of the departed heroes, who laid down their lives in the battle-fields in their loyalty to the people and the King, has many

a point to illustrate. In fact, this is mentioned in Tolkappiyam itself. Besides, Purananuru speaks of the erection and establishment of temples with all the paraphernalia of art, painting and sculpture therein, dedicated to Sivan and Murugan at Tiruchendur in Tirunelveli. The earliest record of Madurai is its centrally situated temples and its famous Indira Vimanam. The only exception among the Indian temples is the famous shrine in Chidambaram, which is made up of wood namely the central portion and this unique aspect carries the antiquity of the origin of the temple to the earliest period of human history according to Tamil traditions.

Thus it is known that the art of painting was practised by the Tamils from an early period in history. For, the way in which every temple is covered with frescoes in different hues stand even to this day speaking to us of the love of the Tamils, in the art of painting. That the Tamils were a joyous people and led prosperous lives is also known from the evidences that they adorned themselves with ornaments fine muslins and sandal-paste. Their love of flowers was inordinate, so to say, that even to this day no people in India spend so much on flowers for festivals as much as the people of the South spend. To put it in simple terms, that the Tamils had a language of flowers in love, another in war and yet another in worship of God! As setforth in Tolkappiyam, the people of the different regions had the deities of their own. The hill-tribes in the region of Kurinji worshipped Murugan. The pastoral tribes in the region of Mullai worshipped Vitnu. The people in the region of Neithal worshipped Varunan. And the people in the region of Marutham worshipped Indiran.

Thus having reviewed briefly the past glory of the Tamils, from the extant literary works, we are forced to ask the pertinent question: what happened to all those achievements? It is neither easy to answer nor even is it possible to explain. For the reasons are not only uncertain but more so that they are eclipsed from the hitherto written history. However a few thinkers of fertile imagination guided by clear reasoning had come to our rescue. Prof. K. Subramaniya Pillai could be mentioned as one among the few![11] For in his writings he refers to the natural

11. The Metaphysics of the Saiva Siddhanta System-PP. 2, 4 by K. Subramaniya Pillai.

calamities, namely of the two floods and points out that not only, did those deluges, once for all hide from human history of the glorious cities of golden gates to which Valmiki refers in his epic of Ramayana, wherein the Pandian monarchs had treasured up the most splendid products of their hoary civilization, but also they have washed away even the last vestiges of the grand libraries of science, art and literature which the first two Tamil Acadamies had built up through the ages of cultural development. The last but not the least corner-stone vouchsafed as a foothold for posterity is the Tolkappiyam and Tirukkural. In the midst of uncertainty and darkness, the ray of light is revealed through the works of Tolkappiyam and Tirukkural. As a matter of pride and pleasure the two works have been almost the real sources of inspiration to the genuinely interested students and research scholars of Tamil history and culture for the past two thousand years! In this ancient Tamil grammar — Tolkappiyam as well as the Tamil Vedam — Tirukkural we find allusions extent to the developed cultural and religious life of the Tamils. As my humble endeavour is to present to the modern readers the ancient cultural and religious life of the Tamils, so let me take you to the literary world of Tirukkural.

TIRUKKURAL

CHAPTER 2

Dr. G. U. Pope, who has translated Tirukkural into English observes: "I have felt sometimes as if there must be a blessing in store for a people that delight so utterly in compositions thus remarkably expressive of a hunger and thirst after righteousness." Dr. Albert Schweitzer appreciates Tirukkural for its wealth of maxims and remarks: "There hardly exists in the literature of the world, a book which contains such lofty maxims."

The form and structure of Tirukkural may be briefly explained. It consists of 133 chapters, constituted of ten couplets for each chapter. Thus it makes the grand total of 1330 couplets. It is divided into three major sections namely the principles of Justice, Wealth and Happiness.[12] It is the noble creation of the solitary genius Tiruvalluvar. The three major divisions are so well arranged beginning with the principle of Justice, that it clearly shows how the principle of Justice, namely the ideal perfection of human relationships, is the basis of the entire work! For it is emphasised in more than one context that it is along the principle of Justice wealth must be acquired as well as happiness should be secured. Only then, there is the justification for both the acquisitions. For, in either cases, if they are pursued apart from the principle of Justice, then both of them are condemned. Evidently, this is relevant, as it is a significant message to the modern socialistic views of life. If a person, according to his position in the society steadfastly adheres to the life and conduct envisaged by Tiruvalluvar, through the three major aspects of his work, then that person is certain to achieve the highest aspect of life in his life-time itself, so it is assured! This is why, Tiruvalluvar is also spoken of as the one who has explained the four values of life[13]-Justice, Wealth, Happiness and Salvation, through the first three values constituted of his work.

In this connection, it is worth mentioning how Tiruvalluvar was only a contemporary of the third Tamil Sangam and he was

not an active member of that literary association in Madurai. By modern research scholars the period assigned for the third Sangam is the first century of Christian era. As the Sangam was constituted of eminent Tamil poets and scholars patronised by the Pandyan kings, so any literary work of eminence was to be approved by them first and only after their approval, that that work could be accepted for popularisation. This tradition known as marapu was in vogue at that time. A certain supernatural element was also prevalent. For instance references are found in the Sangam works that there was a bench[14] of supernatural power. Any literary work of eminence should be placed on it and if that work was held without falling, then it was approved. This was a kind of supernatural test! Considering the ancient period as well as the God-fearing mentality of the traditional Tamil poets and Rulers, it has to be accepted as they always believed in the direct participation of divine elements in human relationships. When Tiruvalluvar wanted his work to be approved by the Tamil Academy, it was not reciprocated. So it is said how Tiruvalluvar challanged them and the result was the supernatural test. It is also pointed out that when the test was conducted, the bench accommodated with due honour the work of Tiruvalluvar. Hence followed the eulogy of honour from the eminent poets of the Tamil Academy including the then president Nakkirar. The collection of their eulogies is known as Tiruvalluvamalai. It is the garland made up of flowers of appreciation by the poets, honouring the Tamil sage Tiruvalluvar for his divine work Tirukkural.

A few eulogies of the Tiruvalluvamalai are worthy of perusal as they throw vital informations of the structure and design of the noble work. The poet Edaikadar[15] expresses his appreciation of Tirukkural through the homely example. The mustard (Katuku) is the smallest Indian spice. Make a hole in it and put in the seven seas. This feat is done through the kural! Thus the poet Edaikadar brings home to us of not only the simplicity of the couplets but more so of their sublime truths. It is to show the depth and magnitude of the ethical precepts, the poet refers to the smallest Indian spice to contain the whole world surrounded by seven seas! From this we are also enabled to undersand thte geographical set up of the earth two thousand

years ago! In addition to that, we know how South-India was importing the spice mustard to other countries in ancient times. The same eulogy is expressed by the poetess Auvaiyar[16] but with the change of only one word. That is, in the place of the spice mustard, Auvaiyar puts the word atom (Anu). What all has been said in the previous eulogy applies exactly but to atom! Split the atom and insert in it the seven seas and that is done through the Kural - accordlng to Auvaiyar. What surprises is the expression of splitting the atom mentioned by a poetess of the Tamil Academy just two thousand years ago! I could say only this much that that tells us the intellectual advancement of the ancient Tamil poets in addition to their God-fearing nature. Yet more eulogies are setforth by other poets including the leading poet Nakkirar. Nevertheless one more eulogy could be sufficient to satisfy the critical enquirers of modern times. For the poet Natthathanar[17] sums up the total number of couplets as one thousand three hundred and thirty exactly. This proves beyond doubt that Tirukkural as we have to-day, of course, after two thousand years, is the original work of Tiruvalluvar with neither insertions of couplets by some later poets nor to speak of interpolation! Thus having numbered the total couplets, Natthathanar insists of their perusal in the order of their setting namely of Justice, Wealth and Happiness. Once this is also done, is there any book of such value to be studied again? That also for a Tamil poet? Such is the interrogation with which the poet Natthathanar ends his eulogy.

It was the ancient Tamil tradition and it continues to be so even to this day that the poet before he commences his work, invokes the blessing of God. In the same spirit of the literary tradition of the Tamils, Tiruvalluvar begins his work paying due honour to the then prevalent ideas of God. Tiruvalluvar pays respect to the 'First One' not only elucidating in the first couplet, but itself commencing with the first letter of Tamil alphabet. As 'A is the first stir in the world of sound, even so the Eternal Adorable One is the prime impulse of all creation'[18]. Evidently, 'A' is the primary sound that human voice could utter and it is also the sound present in every other letter, vowel or consonants in Tamil. This is why, the noted commentator on Tirukkural, Parimelazakar points out that the order of the

Prime Mover is not, order in place, but order in origin. In other words, Tiruvalluvar has setforth in the first couplet the sublime truth that God is supreme and all other aspects only follow from Him. Therefore the aim of human life is the realisation of God. And this purpose is served through education. For, the true aim of education is to make the individual develop his faculties fully and freely so that he is enabled to realise the best in life. Precisely for this reason, Tiruvalluvar explains that the individual should learn well and also practise according to the precept he has learnt.[19] Thus acquiring knowledge he is enabled as well to possess wisdom. Through wisdom the individual realises human limitations and thereby recognises the supremacy of an Agency higher than human agencies. For it is said that the recognition of the supremacy of 'Spiritual Agency' is the highest achievement of all education. Tiruvalluvar asks what is the benefit of education, if the educated one does not respect the sacred nature of Spiritual Agency.[20] Thus according to Tiruvalluvar the aims of education learning etc. get fulfilled only when the spiritual aspect of human life is recognised and due respect is accorded there to. Unless and until this vital aspect of life is accounted, not only the aim of education gets emptied, but education itself becomes futile and fruitless.

Worship of God is not only a means of making all human endeavours meaningful, but more so it is a necessity. For it is the prerogative of rational beings to choose the good life and reject the evil one. Having chosen the good life, it is the duty of individual to aspire for the better and the best. Whether we call the best life, heavenly life or with some other name, it is certainly an ideology. That ideal life should be the goal of all human endeavours. And we are nearer to that through worship of God. God is not far away from us. He is within us. For Tiruvalluvar points out that those who meditate day and night on the sacred feet of the Lord, abiding in the lotus-shaped region of a devout heart, shall endlessly inhabit heavenly abode![21] It is true that our practical life acquires meaningfulness only when we recognise the ideal life and the search after that. But in our striving towards the ideal life, we certainly confront the ills and imperfections of life. For no rational thinker could deny the

presence of ills in our life. And it is to overcome such ills of life, we have to make use of reasoning and reflection. When we do so, we are certain to recognise the guidance of Spiritual Agency, who is not at all limited by likes and dislikes as human beings are subject to. For Tiruvalluvar assures that no ills of life ever touch those that cling to the feet of Him, who is beyond the world of likes and dislikes.[22] It is interesting to note how Tiruvalluvar brings home to us the supremacy of spiritual nature of God through the comparison of human nature of likes and dislikes, which ought not to be attributed to God.

As you sow, so you will reap is an accepted maxim of the Tamils. By doing good things you will get good results. It equally applies to the evil deeds and their consequences. As life involves both the good and the evil aspects, so human actions are subject to those influences and their repercussions. But in both the cases their consequences good and bad bind the individual. This is way Tiruvalluvar points out how both acts through their results lead man to bondage. But when those acts are done as praises to the glory of God, then their results do not bind man. For Tiruvalluvar explains how, deeds, good and evil that spring from ignorance shall not affect those who gloriously sing the praises of the Lord.[23] When man dedicates his life and conduct to God, then he frees himself not only from the bondage of material conditions but also from mental aberrations. For, Tiruvalluvar testifies the truth that they alone are relieved of the eating cares of the mind, who take refuge in the feet of Him. the incomparable One.[24]

It is worthy of our attention to note how Tiruvalluvar gives us hints, not only to acquire divinity but also to secure peace of mind. In order to free from mental tensions we should go above mental proclivities. This is possible when man controls his feelings and emotions and thereby becomes a master of the senses. In fact, only when man controls the senses, he could be said to enjoy even the limited pleasures of life ! Otherwise he could no more claim either to enjoy or have life at all. That is why man must take that course of life where he is not a victim to the desires of senses. For Tiruvalluvar speaks that for ever do they dwell in eternal bliss who pursue the faultless way of Him, having burnt away desires of the five senses.[25]

As a matter of fact, even for leading a normal life of contentment and happiness, it is essential to control desires of the senses. Otherwise man as a bundle of desires will naturally miss the aim of tife. Thereby he will be drifting like an aimless boat in the ocean of life. That is why Tiruvalluvar cautiously reminds that it is impossible to cross the sea of endless temptations of life, except by those who adore the feet of that glorious Being of Virtue.[26] While it is true that we salute as a mark of gratitude to our superiors, there is a traditional way of paying homage to God among the Tamils. In acts of worship they bow their heads. Cognising this truth, accompanied by poetic exaggeration, Tiruvalluvar asks of what worth, like the palsied organs, is the head that bows not to the feet of the Lord of eight attributes.[27] The eight attributes of God, mentioned by Tiruvalluvar need not necessarily be referred to any authoritative Scriptures. For what has been mentioned is only a reference to what he has so far described through the eight couplets of the nature of God. The eight attributes are not exactly either qualities or characteristics that go to make the personality of God. Rather they are the avenues through which the puny intellect of man could perceive the sublime truth of the presence of God. And that also Tiruvalluvar explains through analogies known to reason and reflection of man. This is evident from the first couplet itself where the Tamil sage explains that as the sound 'A' is the beginning of other alphabets so is the First One, the cause of all that there is. Another aspect worthy of our consideration is that the spiritual nature of God should not be identified with human nature which is subject to changes, whereas the nature of God is eternal. This is supported by the particular term Eraivan,[28] which means the ever present One. In fact, Tiruvalluvar has employed this term — Eraivan, in the fifth couplet itself. He employs it again in the tenth couplet. He says none but those who cleave to the feet of Eraivan could traverse the boundless ocean of births and deaths.[29]

In conclusion of the first chaper on God, it is worth while to set forth clearly certain reasonable suggestions. For, what Tiruvalluvar has described is only an account of the then prevalent ideas of God among the ancient Tamils. In every couplet we could see something new in description of God.

But it always remains within the perspective of reason and imagination of man and woman. The analogical explanation further sustains the contention that Tiruvalluvar remains throughout practical and understandable in his exposition of ideas of God. Therefore it may be stated that the ideas of God described by Tiruvalluvar do not stand for any sectarian creed but for man and woman of all climes and colours. It is in this perspective the ideas set forth in Tirukkural acquire universal applicability and adaptability. while basing the entirework on the principle of Justice, Tiruvalluvar has devoted the first chapter-ten couplets, for the exposition of ideas of God. This tells us only the truth how Tiruvalluvar has indicated that God is supreme. All human endeavours could be sensible and meaningful only when they are directed towards God. Peace and happiness could be secured and the everlasting bliss could be achieved only through God. Having read and realised these sublime truths embedded in the sacred work of Tirukkural, many eminent thinkers all over the world agreed to recognise Tirukkural as a bridge between the earth and heaven. Yet more appropriate tribute could be in my humble opinion, that the precepts practised properly could turn the earth itself heaven ! This is not a sympathetic exaggeration of the grandeur of Tirukkural. It is only a generous estimation with reference to the depth and dignity of moral principles set forth in it as the guiding principles of life. This is what I am to prove in the following chapters.

ADORATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

It has been pointed out in the beginning how Justice is the basic principle on which the entire work of Tirukkural is based on. For it is this natural principle which unifies man and woman in search of their happiness which lies in the happiness of all. That is why the principle of justice is explained with reference to the life of the people as a whole, namely the ideal perfection in human relationships. Whenever we could find such perfect relationships existing there we could say prevails Justice. When it is interpreted with reference to human relationships it is called righteousness. In fact, it is righteousness which is the moral virtue of human life. Life acquires meaningfulness when moral virtues are chosen and practised consistently. Only then man could claim his superiority over animals and other unreflective creatures. For it is the mark of rationality that differentiates man from all other beings. And it is the reason in man that enables him to choose the good life and practise the moral virtues through which he secures not only his goodness but also the common good. Thus in the practice of righteousness man qualifies himself for better things of life. Tiruvalluvar[30] says that it is the spirit of righteousness that flings open the doors of heaven and unlocks the treasures of the earth. Realising the intrinsic value of the moral virtue, the Tamil sage asks, what else does profit the soul more than righteousness? The word 'Vuir' stands for soul and thereby a distinction is indicated of body and soul.

It may be pointed out in this connection that the modern ethical theories uphold the importance of virtue, truth, goodness, honesty etc, so much that without their practices, man could be equal only to the animals. For, it is the recognition of those virtues and their practices that make the life of humanity meaningful and thereby reckoned higher, compared to the lower life of animals! Surprisingly enough we find the same idea but with better expression and eloquence - in Tirukkural. For

Tiruvalluvar[31] says, to dwell in the spirit of the higher law of your being is life; but to forget it is death itself. It is important to note the expression 'higher law of your being' for, it is the moral law that sustains the dignity of human life with its inviolable rights and privileges for existence and realisation. Unless this higher or nobler aspect is realised, in the words of Tiruvalluvar it is nomore life but is the death trap.

In the pursuit of righteousness, would not there be shortcomings? There is bound to be. No rational thinker could deny that. And Tiruvalluvar has not only realised human weaknesses and the possibie failures but also indicated how virtues should be continued unafraid. The Tamil sage advises, be unwearied in your service in the cause of righteousness and pursue its spirit wheresoever it guides you.[32] This tells us the truth that the so called freedom of the individual could be claimed fully only when the individual pursues righteousness. Thus in the pursuit of righteousness, man is not only free to seek the good but he is enabled also to realise the best. Modern terminologies like 'self-realisation' or 'God-realisation' etc, could quite fittingly be attributed to the views of righteousness and its practices as it is envisaged by Tiruvalluvar. For at the outset while upholding the importance of righteouesness as the sustaining principle of human life, Tiruvalluvar has distinguished the soul - Vuir from the body - Vutal. It is the soul - Vuir, that has to be realised through the practices of righteousness, honesty etc. And only through the practice of moral virtues, God could also be realised. Therefore what has been setforth in a simple way as a guide to the ancient people by Tiruvalluvar need not necessarily be over simplified and thereby overlooked in our times.

As a matter of fact, God realisation could be sensible only when there is self-realisation. Evidenty, self-realisation could be possible only when the individual keeps his heart pure by eliminating evils and vices. Tiruvalluvar speaks 'be spotlessly pure in your heart'; verily everything is in this one commandment; all else is nothing but a vain show and a hollow symbol.[33] To practise righteousness what all one needs to do is to keep his mind pure. To keep one's mind pure is an injurction or a

command. For, without internal purity and goodness what all a person may do would amount to only a big show! This is the sublime truth modern ethical writers liks Immanuel Kant and T. H. Green have perceived and so emphasised that the internal motivation should be the test of one's moral virtue rather than his external actions. This does not mean external acts have no significance. They acquire importance when the internal factors like motives and intentions are also accounted. That is why Tiruvalluvar has advised to continue the virtuous actions untired; but he has commanded that in such practices one must keep his mind pure.

To say that in order to be virtuous one has to keep his mind pure would amount to an empty statement. For it is essential to give a proper direction for any rational being as to what should be given up from their minds and thereby what they would be able to acquire. In other words, our minds are generally filled with selfish feelings and emotions. When those vague feelings are better interpreted they are known as vices. Only when the vices are removed from our minds, virtues could be inculcated. Tiruvalluvar has clearly recognised this situation. That is why he speaks eloquently that the only way to be virtuous is to remove from one's mind the four vices. They are enmity, lust, wrath and bitter speech.[34] It is worthy to note that the last vice comes under external act and thereby it is evident to see Tiruvalluvar's combined consideration of internal and external aspects of one's conduct.

A person is said to lead a good life when he despises the vices and at the same time pursues, virtuous conduct. Naturally this is possible and practicable through the family institution. We are to discuss that aspect in detail later. However, it has to be noted in this connection of what Tiruvalluvar says of consistency and continuity of virrtuous life. The Tamil sage reminds us by repetition: 'Act, act in the living present stage of life and fill it with virtuous acts of righteousness; for, it is righteousness that is the eternal guide of life and death.'[35] It is worthy to note how the principle of righteousness acquires the most significant treatment owing to its supremacy over life and death of mortals. Tiruvalluvar makes it abundantly clear that

those who abide by that principle naturally acquire the glory of continued life known as immortality.

It has been mentioned already that a just life is that where there prevails the ideal perfections of human relationships. In other words, when there is the fullest avenue freely available to every individual to pursue the path of virtuous conduct, then there is Justice as the basis of social life. No body is hampered or hindered in the pursuit of good life. Neither one is living at the expence of others nor there could be superiority or inferiority complexes. This being the positive nature of righteous conduct and life of the individual as well as the society, TIruvalluvar cuts a negative note of warning as follows: Let there be no talk of the fruits of righteousness between the palanquin - bearer and him that proudly rides in it.[36] This may be interpreted in more than one way. However, it may be reasonably accepted that the palanquin was the conveyance in ancient times, particularly among the wealthy Tamils. Usually those palanquins were to be carried by able - bodied servants. A talk on righteousness between the rider and the palanquin bearers would, not only be out of place but more so it would be meaningless. For, the principles of righteousness, virtue etc. are only for those who take life seriously and thereby limit more and more of their external acquisitions and thus increase the internal awakening. Only then they would be steadfast in their virtuous conduct which could enable them to put an end to all sorrows and sufferings of life. Understood in that deeper sense, Tiruvalluvar declares, all through life pursue righteousness; you will find in your unwearied search a stone that blocks up the painful road to future births.[37]

Incidentally here is a clear statement of Tiruvalluvar on future lives. There are more references to that aspect, which may be relevant to discuss later. Mention has been made of the supremacy of Justice as the guiding principle of life and death. Hence righteousness assumed the supremacy of eternal guide of life. For either the present life or its death, with that, life does not stop. There is continuity of life either in this world itself or in other worlds. This was an accepted tradition of the ancient Tamils. Tiruvalluvar recognises fully those ideas. That is

why the pursuit of righteousness is made an injunction. The pursuit is not obligatory but unconditional in its observation. This is true by the fact of the higher law inherent in man and woman. In fact, this point of view has been already mentioned by Tiruvalluvar. So much so, when man and woman fully realise their nature as rational and moral beings, then they must follow only that path of righteousness which alone could yield goodness and happiness to one and all.

Tiruvalluvar insists that the pursuit of happiness should be subordinated to righteousness. For it is only through the virtue of righteousness, happiness should be acquired. Only then it could also be justified. This is setforth in clear terms as follows: That alone is happiness which comes through the pursuit of righteousness; all else bring in their train either pain or shame.[38] Thus we understand how much importance has been given to the principles of virtue, righteousness etc, as they constitute the basic factors of human life. For without due regard to those moral factors of life, any pursuit could either end in misery or disgrace. That is why Tiruvalluvar concludes the chapter on righteousness with the sanest advice. The virtue one must accomplish in his life-time is righteousness; the vice one must abhor is disgrace.[39] No sane person could like to live a life of disgrace. Therefore, it is a 'must' for him to give up vices. This conduct acquires significance because once a person lives a life, devoid of vices, that itself is a virtuous life. That is why Tiruvalluvar has stated that all endeavours should be only for the accomplishment of righteousness in one's life. By this simple observation, the Tamil sage has also reminded us the purposive nature of human life. Human life is not an accident. For it has something greater to be realised and that realisation is none other than self-realisation. This could be, nay, should be done by all rational beings in their life-time. In whichever way it could be undertaken and realised, the principle of Justice is the basis. For, from that principle all other moral virtues acquire their support and sustenance. Thus while reighteousness is the sustaining factor of human life, the other equally important factor is Rain according to Tiruvalluvar. He has praised Rain through ten couplets and that is a clear indication of how much importance the Tamil

sage has given to it. It is almost similar to the importance given to the principles of righteousness as well as Truth. It is not for me to comment on it. But it is for me to corroborate with evidences and show how far Tiruvalluvar could be justified for having given so much importance to Rain as it constitutes the visible basis of life for all beings.

ADORATION OF RAIN

Tiruvalluvar pays tributes to Rain, in the characteristic way of his own. For, life of all beings in the world acquires fertility only through water. This is why, even great philosophers like Thales in ancient Greece attributed to water the origin of all beings. Tiruvalluvar says as Rain is the gift from above - the sky, by which all beings are sustained in the world, so it is known as ambrosia.[40] By using the word ambrosia the Tamil sage has gained two benefits, so to speak. For, ambrosia is said to be the food for gods. This interpretation suits the present situation. For, it is from the sky that it rains. Secondly it is because that it rains, all living beings are enabled to continue to live. Thereby also it acquires the designation of food for all beings for their continued life. All this is clearly summed up when Tiruvalluvar says that all that is good and delicious, Rain yields to man and thereby itself becomes part of his food.[41]

As a matter of fact, we could better understand the significance of Rain, through the assumption of its absence. The pertinent question is: If there is no Rain? Evidently this question has been well anticipated by the Tamil sage and that is why he gives the suitable answer. If Rain fails to yield from above, then famine would rage over the wide sea-girt world of ours![42] Tiruvalluvar has specifically mentioned the dangerous consequence, namely starvation among living beings. For, unless it rains neither there could be water to drink nor that situation could sustain lives of animals and plants. Thus it would be an atmosphere of total starvation. Under such a famine - stricken condition, what even the able and efficient farmers could do? Aptly it is answered that no more would the farmers till their fields, if the springs of the heavens are dried up.[43] Thus we find how essential Rain is for the wellbeing of not only humanity but also for all living beings in the world. By explaining the negative aspects of famine, starvation etc. in the absence of Rain, Tiruvalluvar brings home to us of the

double roles played by Rain, not only as the sustainer of life but also as the destroyer of life. For he points out that it is the Rain that causes ruin and it is the Rain that restores as well the ruined to fertility and fortune.[44]

We have seen in the earlier part, how Tiruvalluvar explained the natural process of Raining in a supernatural way. That is, Rain is the food for gods and when that food is available for all human beings in the world, then they, not only live but have the continued life as well. Hence Rain deserves to be known as ambrosia which gives continued life known as immortality. This much of supernatural interpretation given to the natural phenomenon of Raining particularly by Tiruvalluvar cannot be ignored. For Tiruvalluvar belonged to the highest order of Tamil poets of the Sangam. It was in vogue among the poets to employ figurative expressions and thereby colour natural phenomenon with supernatural garb. But, what we have to note is that Tiruvalluvar having done justice to his poetic talents, also places before us the exact nature of the physical phenomenon involved in the process of Raining. The Tamil sage points out that even the treasures of the mighty ocean would diminish, if the clouds cease to suck its waters and yield back through the showers of Rain.[45]

Owing to our modern developments of scientific knowledge of the laws of Nature, we are fully aware of the natural phenomenon involved in the process of Raining. But the same scientific understanding of the natural process that is involved in Raining has been exactly summed up by Tiruvalluvar two thousand years ago! This tells us of the mental make up of the ancient Tamils in whom there was the proportionate and balanced blending of faith in God and reason in the working of the natural processes of the world. It is the reason in man when properly developed, he is enabled to see the sublimity of natural laws through which he perceives the presence of God. That is why he deifies the natural things and their wonderfully punctual occurrences. When those processes fail to function, man sees also the negative results. This is what we find of Rain. How it helps living beings and how also it hinders the very life of beings. And it is in that perspective, Tiruvalluvar adores

Rain so much. His adoration acquires meaningfulness when, he speaks that not even a blade of grass will rustle if Rain drops not from above.[46] This needs no further explanation except to accept for its realism. It is not realism alone that we find in the poetic genius of Tiruvalluvar. We find naturalism as well as supernaturalism blended together bestowing their total benefits on humanism. For the concern of Tiruvalluvar is man and woman in their pursuit of happiness and divinity. It is for that sublime purpose all other aspects, natural and supernatural are utilised with poetic skill. And this truth is setforth in clear terms when Tiruvalluvar says, if the heavens withhold their waters - Rain, then there would be neither festivals, nor even the daily worship of Gods on the earth.[47] In the same spirit of humanism, the Tamil sage speaks the truth that if there is no Rain then, there could neither be charity of alms-giving nor even the practice of austerity in this wide world.[48]

Master-minds generally speak of deterioration in morals among human societies. It is the deeper aspect of human relationships that would be upset, if natural processes do not function properly. One instance is Rain. For if it rains not, the negative results have been very aptly setforth by Tiruvalluvar. He has done it not only in a realistic and naturalistic manner but also in the supernaturalistic way. That is why he has maintained how even the worship of gods on earth will be jeopardised if it rains not. If there is no worship of gods, no practice of virtues and austerities, then it is left to our imagination of what would be the nature of human society on the earth! This negative state of affairs happens on our earth and in our lives owing to the continued absence of Rain. Therefore it is natural and also necessary to say that without Rain human society would be society minus humanity! Because the sweet milk of human nature such as virtue, truth and goodness will be dried up. Consequently there shall neither be justice in human relationships nor the virtues in their associations and aspirations. This is why Tiruvalluvar says that all functions and concerns of life cease without water and there will be no flow of water without Rain.[49] Thus we find that according to Tiruvalluvar a good life is that life where man and woman must have faith in God ; pursue their happiness along the principle of Justice and

this should be sustained by the natural processes like Rain. While the principle of Justice is the basis of moral life, Rain is the basis of physical life. As this is the good life for man and woman so it is for all. As the good life moves towards the better and the best so it acquires a religious significance.

CHAPTER 3

FAMILY ORDER OF LIFE

It is the special privilege of man to reason and think over the past in relation to the present and thus wisely plan for the future. Only in this manner the meaning of the term - Man which includes woman as well, as a rational animal, gets its fulfilment. It is this faculty of reasoning that differentiates man from the animal and other unreflective creatures. And it is this faculty of reasoning and planning that enables a captain, for instance, to steer his ship safely to harbour through the perils of the sea. As a matter of fact, the Tamil poets never ignored to recognise and describe the totality of human life comparing to the ocean, in which every individual has to steer his boat — individual life, safely, so that he could voyage through the constant waves and winds - sufferings and sorrows of life — of the sea, leading towards the end of salvation. Lack of foresight and inadequate knowledge of the various forces that govern human lives will surely lead men to become mere ramblers with no definite aims in their life in this world.

The Tamils had recognised from early times, the worthy and equal part played by women in life. A free and full development of all human instincts could grow only in the harmonious union of man and woman. The ancient Tamils realised this basic factor of human life and had experienced that a perfectly conceived relationship between man and woman only could yield the inexpressible joy resulting therefrom. To substantiate the truth, it is interesting to note the following references. The Sangam classic Paripadal glorifies only that as true love, which becomes the basis of the family institution. Man and woman feel spontaneously towards each other and thus establish the monogamous family institution based on love, which penetrates the vital aspects of their life. Love that binds man and woman together is of that type in which one reaches perfection through the other, namely husband and wife and together they make the well balanced and harmonious life, which becomes the moral institution of their continued life. To the man, she is the only

woman and to the woman, certainly he is the only man in the whole world! As a matter of interest, this kind of a truly wedded, happy life is beautifully portrayed by saint Manikka-vasakar in his Tirukkovaiyar.

Thus we find how the Tamils honoured the genuine feelings and emotions spontaneously expressed by man and woman, truly realised in the family institution. For the Tamils revered the institution of monogamous marriage. Because, it is only through monogamous marriage there is the proper avenue to bring - forth children and bring them up in an atmosphere of sociability. Herein comes another vital aspect of life, namely education. Education for the purpose of enlightenment and thus education for the realisation of the highest values and virtues of life was the ideal of the Tamils. A noteworthy instance is the Sangam classic Purananuru, wherein is described a number of women poets and scholars drawn from the then existed strata of society. While they recognised different strata of society based on occupations and skills of the people, yet the highest respect was given to the learned, irrespective of their possessions of wealth. For example, Purananuru records a verse by a ruler of the Pandyan dynasty. The ruler speaks that precedence and respect should follow one's learning and culture and not birth, wealth or age! Yet another reference is made to an young and energetic ruler, who discharged his royal duties, through the advice of the learned, the wise and the experienced. Hence all savants had equal and respected treatment in his kingdom. The leading poet of Tamil Sangam Nakkirar also makes a thought provoking observation in Purananuru as follows: 'Birth, death, sorrow, sickness, pain and joy — all these exist in the course of nature. The food consumed by a man in a day is only handful whether he be a king who weilds his sway over the wide world, or a hili-tribes-man, who protects his small millet land, night and day, from the ravages of the denizens of the forest, the elephant and the boar. Either person covers his body with two pieces of garment, wherefore it should be the aim of the wealthy to be liberal. It is patent that the possession of wealth is transitory, the gratification of senses disappointing.' Evidently we find how Nakkirar speaks in eloquent terms, the philosophic and religious aspects of the lives of the Tamils.

So much so, we understand how the Tamils recognised the importance of wealth and happiness but, were wise enough to subordinate those aspects to the moral virtues of righteousness and Justice. They gave the primary place to that moral principle as it constituted the basis of all human aspirations and associations. In fact, the Tamil sage Tiruvalluvar, as mentioned earlier, recognises only three values of life and the primary importance is accorded to that intrinsic value Aram — Justice, on which alone depend other instrumental values, Porul and Inbam, wealth and happiness respectively. It is only through the three values that man and woman, guided properly could achieve yet higher or the highest value which is beyond the description of language according to Tiruvalluvar, This is why he is also known as the one who has spoken the four values through the three values of life !

VIRTUES OF MAN

Tiruvalluvar pays the highest tribute to the family institution in general and the householder in particular. For it is explained that the householder firm in virtuous path is the sustainer of the three orders of life.[50] The mention of three orders of life excluding the family order of life deserves to be explained in this connection. According to the well developed traditions of the ancient Tamils, the life of the individual passes through four stages. The first one being the stage of childhood and boyhood, it is a period of individual freedom protected by the parents. The second stage is the family order of life with responsibilities and the resultant restraints on freedom. The third stage comes in the later periods of life where, the individual is freed from the household responsibilities. It may be pointed out at this juncture that that person is protected or looked after by his children, now grown up, preferably by the eldest son. The fourth stage is the final stage, in the life of the individual, where he devotes all his remaining life in the pursuit of spiritual values. This explanation as a matter of fact is supported by the great commentator on Tirukkural, Parimelazakar. However, our interest of explaining the four orders of the individual life is only to show, how the family institution occupies the central position, nursing, nurturing and helping the other three orders of life of the individual. It is true that the four orders of life of the individual could also be applied to the society as a whole. This is what exactly the Tamil sage means when he pronounces that the householder is the friend of the orphan, the poor and even the dead ![51]

If Tiruvalluvar could have stopped with the statement that the family institution protects only the recognised four orders of life, then it would have been merely an academic narration of the past cultural and religious life of the Tamils. But the verdict from the Tamil sage that the family institution becomes a centre of moral and religious sanctity, not only to the recognised orders of social life but also to the non-recognised orders of social life, in this world of ours and more strikingly to the

departed souls, clearly reveal to us the comprehensive view of life of the Tamils. As a matter of fact, ancestor-worship was in vogue among the Tamils and that worship was enjoined as one of the duties of the house holder. For it is clearly stated that the greatest duty of the householder is to keep to the five-fold rules of the conduct towards the departed souls, gods, guests, relatives and himself.[52]

Through the statement of the five-fold rules of conduct pertaining to the householder, Tiruvalluvar has not only explained the moral basis but also the spiritual bias of the family institution. For it is specifically maintained that the householder, perferably the son of the deceased has the duty of adoring the family gods as well as the departed souls in addition to other members of society. This clearly reveals how altruism was the cardinal virtue of the famiiy institution. Therefore the name and fame of such families could naturally live for ever being remembered and honoured by the society. In fact Sangam literature abounds with references to such wealthy and illustrious families who acquired wealth through virtues of honesty and righteousness and also spent them for equally virtuous and charitable purposes. This is why, Tiruvalluvar reminds us, behold the god-fearing man who raises his fortune with an unspotted hand and generously shares his bread with others. Therefore the glorious line of his descendants shall ever remain virtuous.[53] Thus according to Tiruvalluvar, the foundations of family institution are, faith in the supremacy of god, respect for elders and the practices of virtues realised through love. When all these aspects are truly realised then the moral basis acquires spiritual significance. For it is explained that if the light of love and virtue illumines the family at home, then it is said that all its ends are fulfilled and thereby it reaches perfection.[54] Understood in this sense, the pertinent question arises whether there could be a better order of life than the family order for the realisation of the highest values of life. Without any reservation whatsoever, Tiruvalluvar upholds the moral supremacy and practical efficacy of the family order of life. The positive answer is given in the form of a query raised by the sage himself. If one leads the wedded life along the principles of virtues, what higher values are there, yet to be achieved by him through other orders of life ? [55]

In other words, if the family institution is based on virtues and led along the moral principles, the highest form of blissful life could very well be realised therein. It is in this way Tiruvalluvar justifies the importance as well as the preservation of family institution where alone there could be the fullest possibilities for the practices of virtues, providing at the sametime, the suitable environment for the progeny to grow in the spiritual atmosphere. Only in that perspective our moral life acquires spiritual continuity, specifically known as immortality. In fact, Tiruvalluvar makes this truth abundantly clear when he points out that among those who labour for the life eternal - immortality - the greatest are those who lead a virtuous family life.[56]

It may be mentioned in this connection that the pursuit of moral life is designed towards the spiritual goal of self-realisation. This is evident from the fact that life, particularly human life is looked upon, according to the Tamil tradition, as the unique privilege to realise the meaning of life. It is in the realisation of the meaningfulness of life, the moral dignity of man acquires spiritual significance. And it is through realisation, namely living a life guided by rational principles that man is enabled to realise the supremacy of spiritual values of life. For it is those moral and spiritual values which help mankind for their realisations as well as their salvation. While it has been shown how this kind of a purposive meaningful life could be lived in the family order of life, it is also true that people with greater enthusiasm and longing for higher values, continued to live ascetic order of life. Knowing fully well such orders of life like the hermits and ascetics, Tiruvalluvar has stressed the greatest value as well as the benefits of family order of life. In fact this truth has already been hinted wherein we have seen how the householder nurses, nurtures and sustains all other people of different stages of life. Now this truth is setforth in a better and clearer way. For the Tamil sage speaks that the householder is holier than the ascetic, for the householder not only performs his duties virtuously but also helps the hermits and others to pursue their courses of life.[57] The dignity of the householder is further enhanced, when Tiruvalluvar declares that virtue rightly belongs to the family order of life; other orders of life if pursued blamelessly, due recognition may be given.[58] In

other words, the highest regard and recognition must go to the family order of life according to Tiruvalluvar. This is evident from the fact that the wedded life of one man to one woman based on love and virtue constitutes the family order of life. This moral institution acquires social significance by the fact that the virtuous life helps not only the inmates of the institution but also the other members of the society as a whole. Therefore the ethical concept virtue could be legitimately applied only to that institution which serves the interests of all.

Thus we find how Tiruvalluvar gives the priority of importance to the family institution as an ethical body. Truly it is the training ground for the practice of moral virtues. And equally true it is that other virtues, either political or economic are also practised therein. This is why the well known maxim says that charity begins at home. If one lives such an ideal life, then certainly he goes up in the spiritual ladder and claims divinity. This is what Tiruvalluvar means when he says that a God among men he will be looked upon, who fulfils all the virtues through practice at home.[59] The practices of virtues though common to man and woman, yet it has been so far explained mostly with reference to man. This is consistent because Tiruvalluvar explains virtues with reference to woman in a chapter exclusively. To keep company with consistency let us acquaint with that chapter.

VIRTUES OF WOMAN

According to the Tamil tradition, monogamous marriage based on love is looked upon, as a replica of divine life on earth. Such being the dignity of family order of life, what should be the virtues of woman is meticulously described by the Tamil Sage Tiruvalluvar. It has been already explained how the family institution acquires social significance by the fact that it is the nurturing ground of all virtues of human aspiration and association. Once it acquires social status, it naturally depends on wealth and its management in a proper manner. The term economics in its origin from the Greek word Okionomus means home management. Unless the income and expenditure at the domestic level are properly balanced and fruitfully used, neither the inmates could satisfy their requirements nor there could prevail healthy atmosphere at home. Realising this basic factor of the family institution, the Tamil tradition has assigned the leading role to woman and she is known as the ruler of household — Illaz. Cognisant of this traditional virtue of woman, Tiruvalluvar speaks that she is a good help-mate who possesses all the wealth of womanly virtues, one among them is that she spends not beyond the means of her husband.[60]

It is interesting to note that Tiruvalluvar has emphasized the economic virtue, particularly for the wife in the family. More interesting it is to note that wife is an help-mate. This clearly tells us what a dignified role woman plays in the world of family institution. It is not just equality that is the claim of wife. It is something more than equality. For it has already been indicated that she is the ruler of household. So the question of the legal term equality does not fit in. Then it is an honour that is given to women not only in the family order of life but also in the social activities and associations. This is consistent with the Tamil tradition. The pertinent question arises: Why should woman be accorded so much privilege? Tiruvalluvar opines that that privileged honour is nothing but the due to her

chastity. For it is pointed out that nothing is more precious than a woman, firm in mind maintains her wedded faith.[61]

If women enjoyed honour and unique privileges in the society of the ancient Tamils, it was exclusively due to their charm and chastity which adorned the cultured life of the people. The heroine of Silappadikaram, Kannaki is the the classic example of chastity. It is this feminine charm when proved spotless, then she is raised to the level of divinity. Such being the case of the crowning glory of the chastity of woman, if the same gets deteriorated, then whatever may be the greatness of man, their household gains no recognition except condemnation. Tiruvalluvar puts this truth in a simple manner that all other blessings avail not if the wife is devoid of domestic virtues.[62] By this obeservation, the Tamil sage makes it abundantly clear the dominant role woman plays as a constructive partner of life through the family institution. She could make the home either heaven or hell according to her possession of positive or negative virtues respectively. For, it is asked, what is there that is lacking in the home that is sweetened by the worthy mate, and what would profit it, were it to be devoid of the charm of virtuous womanhood.[63]

As chastity is the crowning among virtues of a wedded woman, so the Tamil sage in conformity to the traditions, has laid the greatest importance on it. But there are other virtues as well to adorn her. This is why Tiruvalluvar portrays a comprehensive picture or rather it may be called a definition of the personality of the ruler of household. It is explained that she is a wife who, keeping watch over herself, tends her husband with loving kindness and jealously guards the honour of her home.[64] Recognising the dignity of woman of such virtuous nature of disposition, Tiruvalluvar pays tribute through poetic exaggeration. For it is said that even the clouds obey the behests of a woman, who rises with the sun and worships no other gods except her lord.[65] As pointed out earlier, that it is a poetic exaggeration of the glory of a virtuous woman to whom god is none other than her husband. However it should be noted that it does not mean that the household - lady worships no god. She does naturally. But it is to stress the importance of her

chastity, namely her firmness of faithfulness to the wedded partner that that statement that she worships no god except her husband is made. For the importance of preserving chastity is so great for a wedded lady that it should grow up from her consent and willingness. In other words, chastity of a woman cannot be enforced from external sources whatever may be the nature. That is why, Tiruvalluvar asks of what avail is your ceaseless watching and guarding of a woman? Knowing the futility of such external enforcements, the Tamil sage gives the answer that the surest armour of a woman is her own chastity.[66]

Thus according to Tiruvalluvar, woman is the charm of life and her chastity preserved is the crowning glory of the domestic institution. Though the Tamil sage has laid the greater stress on virtues of woman as the crowning glory of the family order of life, yet it implicitly takes for granted of virtues of the bread-winner also. Only then, the morale of the family order of life gains spiritual significance. However, it is pointed out that even the virtues of man are fullv developed to the heights of glory, if woman retains not her chastity, then they could no more claim name or fame. For it is said that never can a man boast of the lion-like gait before his scornful foes, when the wedded wife leads a shameless life.[67] Therefore it is evident to understand that the moral dignity of the family order of life is enhanced and sustained only when the wedded wife remains true to her virtues. If this ideal harmony of virtues between husband and wife are secured in their domestic relationships, then certainly they could claim the privilege of living and thereby setting an example of the ideal life on earth. In fact it is this idea that is setforth by Tiruvalluvar in his characteristic way of combining idealism with realism and supernaturalism. For it is explained that in the world of gods will be sung the glory of the lovely one, who is true to him that has gained her as his bride.[68]

It is true that Tiruvalluvar has maintained so far the height of idealism and supernaturalism in the adoration of the virtues of man and woman in general and of chastity of woman in particular with family order of life. But it is equally true to mention in this connection that the Tamil sage does not cease to

be a realist as well. For he concludes the chapter on virtues of woman with the note of realism and rationalism. In other words, such an ideal life envisaged by Tiruvalluvar, wherein the virtues of both the partners intermingle harmoniously gaining fruitfulness only through begetting worthy children. For it is mentioned that wise deem the virtuous ways of a wife a blessing, and worthy offspring a good ornament of the home.[69] Without children, the family order of life does not get completion and perfection. That is why Tiruvalluvar has emphasised begetting of children, but cautiously enough he has added that those children should be worthy of the noble virtues of their parents. While we are painfully aware of modern trends of family planning, etc. let us listen to the views of Tiruvalluvar on begetting of children.

CHILDREN

We have seen how the family order of life acquires completion only through begetting children. In fact the birth of a child is looked upon as the fruit of marriage. Therefore family institution without children would be barren and empty. This is why Tiruvalluvar with all his recognition of idealism and supernaturalism accorded equal importance to realism. This is crystal clear, when he says that of all the blessings men aspire in life, we know not of anything greater than that of begetting wise and worthy children.[70] Evidently we find the recognition of the necessity of more than one child. However that plurality of number is qualified by wise and worthy children. Herein we perceive the depth of wisdom shown by the Tamil sage. For it is not the quantity that is stressed but it is the quality of children that is emphasised. Understood in that sense, the question of family planning as we are facing in our times does not fit in squarely in the context given therein by Tiruvalluvar. For, once it comes to be known that it is the begetting of worthy and wise children that that family institution could be proud of, then it assumes the moral responsibility of the parents to procreate such number of children as it could afford healthy atmosphere not only for the children but also for the parents to attend them in their well–being. If there is to be personal care of children by parents themselves then it would be an imperative on them not to exceed the numbers, so that they discharge their duties towards children aptly and adequately. This is clearly stated by Tiruvalluvar through the following couplets.

With reference to personal attendance to the care and protection of children, it is looked upon not only as a matter of service to the helpless, but more so as a matter of pleasure and joy for the parents. For it is said that the touch of children makes the parents thrill with joy while the prattle sounds music in their ears.[71] Therefore it is not only a joy for the parents to attend their children but also it is their duty. This is evident from the fact, that those who fail in their filial duty only take

pleasure in the tunes of musical instruments. For it is clearly pointed out, only to them the tunes of the flute and the veena are sweet, who have not heard the lispings of their little ones.[72] This is only a poetic way of explaining the natural charm of one thing namely the voices of children with the qualified charm of another, the musical tunes. From this it is also evidenced that the ancient Tamils were fond of music and had suitable instruments to play on. This also tells us their refined feelings and emotions constituting their social and cultural life at large. The charm of the relationship between parents and children at home reaches its climax, so to speak, when Tiruvalluvar says, sweeter to him than the food of gods is the frugal soup playfully splashed by the tender hands of one's own children.[73]

In explaining the relationship between parents and children, Tiruvalluvar has minimised his observations. Yet those meaningful observations are worthy of our considerations. For, those observations carefully examined give rise to questions which are pertinent to our modern times as well. If parents take genuine and personal interest in the welfare of children, then will it really help for the multiplication of number of children ? Readers need not be hasty to answer it. Better, let them ponder over that basic question. Another equally pertinent question is: If children are brought up in that atmosphere envisaged by the Tamil sage, will they in their later years revolt against their parents ? I request once again the readers to think over this issue calmly rather than give hasty answers. For Tiruvalluvar has clearly stated, perhaps briefly, the ideal and true relationship that ought to prevail in the atmosphere of family order of life.

Thus having explained the charming relationship between parents and children, now Tiruvalluvar proceeds to outline the rational relationship that ought to be maintained with the grown ups. The Tamil sage asks, what duty is there more sacred for a father than to make his son worthy to adorn the highest place in the council of the wise.[74] With the same spirit of idealism, Tiruvalluvar also enjoins the duty of a worthy son to his parents. For it is said that no deeper debt of gratitude does a son owe to his father than to make the wise exclaim : What penance he did to be blessed with such a worthy son.[75] While explaining the

indebtedness of son to his parents, mention is made only to the father. From this we understand how Tiruvalluvar maintains, as a realist, a distinction, between the roles played by father and mother in the formation, growth and development of the personality of a son. For the joy and the sufferings both before birth and immediately after birth of the child of a mother cannot, nay, should not be equalled with that of the father. This is not merely recognised by Tiruvalluvar but specifically expressed when he speaks that a mother's eyes sparkle with delight at the first cry of her infant son, but far greater is her joy when she hears the glory of his wisdom.[76]

So much so, it would be a matter of pride, pleasure, dignity and delight for the parents to hear the glory of their son. But this would be a personal glory of the family only, as they benefit through praises from other people. However, that is not the whole truth according to Tiruvalluvar. For, the benefit of a wise and worthy son is not to be confined either to the family or to the society. It is the benefit for humanity as a whole. If I may be permitted to explain through illustrations, I could mention that the wise sons through the ages like Buddha and Christ were not the benefits of their parents alone, they were and continue to be so, for mankind as a whole! It is this sublime truth we perceive when Tiruvalluvar says that far more than the parents doth the world of all beings delight for the presence of wise sons.[77]

In fact, it is this kind of virtuous and wise children to be acclaimed as the assets of humanity, Tiruvalluvar recommends to be brought up and nurtured in the family institutions. While the Tamil sage has explained the universal benefits of such illustrious sons, it is further explained how the benefits of fame and name accrue to the family not for one period of life but for several lives to come. For it is said that evil shadows not a man through the cycles of the sevenfold births, who is blessed with such worthy and wise children.[78]

As a matter of fact, the specific mention of seven-fold births deserves to be carefully studied. For it throws a good deal of light on some of the basic religious principles and practices adopted by the Tamils. The belief in life after death is an accepted tradition among the Tamils. In a way it is this belief which sustains the claims for leading a virtuous life on earth so

that a better form of life may be obtained in the future life. The seven-fold births explains the order of life from lower to higher and the highest being, human life. In fact the Sangam Poetess Auvaiyar has put it aptly that it is rare to be born as a human being and rarer it is to be born without deaf or dumb and so on. Thus the virtues and vices we practise have their influences on our lives to come. That principle which governs the forms of lives we are entitled by our deeds is known as Karma-vinaippayan. Appropriately Tiruvalluvar refers to that principle also. It is explained that the wise parents look upon their children as their wealth owing to their virtuous deeds. But that in not the whole truth. For the wise children are born so, by the virtue of their deeds in their previous lives.[79] In other words, being born as wise children in a virtuous family, they are only reaping the fruits of their deeds done in their past lives. This is exactly known as Vinaippayan Nukarthal - eating the fruits of the past deeds, generally designated as Karma.

Incidentally it may be noted how Tiruvalluvar has also explained some of the religious convictions of the ancient Tamils. Perhaps he has done it with simplicity of expression and clarity of its meaning. This is evident from the fact of his adherence to realism. For, the practical life is more important than all other principles or postulates of moral maxims. While thus maintaining realism, the Tamil sage has cautiously included the vital principles of strict moral life, through which clear explanations are afforded to principles like Karma and Trans-migration, namely the passage of soul from one life to another. These principles if isolated from practical life would amount to abstract terminologies, difficult to understand. That is why, the Tamil sage primarily stressed the importance of practical life and other practices and principles followed later. If I may say so, that it is the synthetic approach which includes various aspects of life in their unity and also gives us a comprehensive meaning of life as a whole.

LOVE

The significance of the concept of love acquires a new dimension when it is studied at this juncture. For it has already been explained how the relationship between man and woman is based on love and it is only stabilised through the establishment of family order of life. Through that moral order of life, love is substantiated through the birth of wise and worthy children. Having said and done so much, Tiruvalluvar ventures to explain in detail that sublime idea of love. And that is why it acquires a new dimension. For it is not an abstract idea any more now than the most practical principle which not only governs human relationships at home but also guides them towards wider and wiser aspects of human associations and aspirations. In other words, love at this particular stage of the family order of life is no more a selfish possession. For it has acquired a clear status of altruism. This is evident from the fact that that love between man and woman widens towards their children. This is the altruistic nature of love at this juncture. When it further ripens as it ought to be, then it breaks the barriers of narrow limits of even the family relationships. This does not mean the insignificance of either the family order or of its noble relationships. They stand without any dimunition of their moral significance. That is why from their stable and permanent position further extension becomes possible and sensible. Understood in that sense, Tiruvalluvar asks, is there a bolt to fasten the gates of love? The answer is negative because, love as a noble feeling of regard for the beloved as well as the affectionate, it cannot be restrained or restricted. For the tender tears of the affectionate one proclaim to others the love within.[80]

Modern psychologists explain how most of our activities are guided by feelings of sympathy, empathy and emotion. While sympathy is feeling with others, empathy is feeling into others. When the feeling becomes very strong then it has a total effect of influencing the total personality. This is emotion. In fact psychologists also designate love as an emotion, the strongest feeling

between man and woman. This psychological explanation of love as the strongest feeling between the opposite sexes could aptly be applied to the animals as well. But the concept of love explained by Tiruvalluvar differs to a considerable extent from the psychological interpretations. In other words, while it agrees to some extent with the psychological basis as the strongest feeling as love is, it is guided by reason and reflection with reference to human relationships. For we have seen that that man alone is for her as she alone is for him. I am certain that we cannot, nay should not attribute this human nature to the animals. Therefore love is the unique nature of humanity. Devoid of love would mean human beings minus humanity! In other words, they are nothing but selfish creatures. This is evident from the fact that those devoid of love claim everything for themselves while those with love sacrifice themselves.[81]

Thus we understand how love is the uniting factor of all human relationships and this truth begins to flourish only from the domestic institution. While it begins in a small way as love between parents and children, it does not stop with that. It grows from strength to strength so to speak, reaching humanity at large. For it is said that love of home begets tenderness to all and tenderness grows into the wider and wiser association of the friendship and fellowship of mankind.[82] Once we understand the depth of love as the unifying factor of all diverse relationships of humanity, then we cannot isolate any normally acceptable forms of human relationship from the foundation of love. This is why Tiruvalluvar points out that it is only the ignorant who speak that love is an ally of virtue alone; for even against the evils of life, love is also our shield and armour.[83] Such is the depth of love that all human relationships in their ideal forms achieve completion in and through love. Thus when this completion is perfected in the process of one's moral life on this earth itself, then it acquires divinity. For Tiruvalluvar says that the glory of one's happiness and perfection in life are only the rewards of the practices of their unbroken love on earth.[84]

Having thus explained the depth and dignity of love, Tiruvalluvar brings home to us the negative consequences of

human actions bereft of love. The Tamil sage calls our pity for the loveless heart dreaming of the blessings of life. For it is similar to a lonely tree withering on the dry sands of the desert.[85] It is worthy to note of the analogy of the desert whose barrenness is likened to that of a loveless heart. This also brings with it further explanation that love is life to the individual, as water is life to the desert. As in the absence of water even other fertile regions dry up and thereby become deserts, so also a loveless heart is dried up of the sweet milk of human nature. When this barrenness occurs, how it affects the life of the individual is further explained. As the sun scorches the worm that yonder creeps and crawls, even so the wrath of righteousness comes down upon the unloving.[86] Herein we find how Tiruvalluvar combines in a natural way idealism with supernaturalism. Instead of saying God will punish the unloveable, the Tamil sage puts it on a rational basis related with realistic examples. This does not mean that Tiruvalluvar denies the due place for supernaturalism. But he does so without giving up rationalism and realism.

Though it is true that love gets expressed only through external acts of human conduct, yet it is essentially a matter of internal poise and possession. Only in that perspective as a moral virtue, love also acquires the spiritual dignity. That is why Tiruvalluvar asks of what avail is the external perfection of a stately form, if love is not enthroned in the heart within.[87] For life throbs only with the warmth of love. Therefore he is a bundle of bones clad with skin who has not tasted the sweet springs of love.[88] In other words, it is only he who has tasted the sweetness of love could claim to have life and happiness eternity. Tiruvalluvar points out that only to weave the eternal bond of love does the soul enter again and again the human form of life.[89]

In conclusion of this chapter on love, it may be pointed out how Tiruvalluvar has further added to our knowledge certain philosophical ideas. While maintaining a distinction between internal poise and external acts, Tiruvalluvar mentions the soul-Vuir and body - yakkai and points out how only through love, the soul could be realised- He further points out that without

love neither could it be possible for self-realisation nor there could be meaning for the external acts of the body. If we combine these philosophical ideas with those religious ideas explained already, namely karma and transmigration, then we are on a sound footing of a clearer picture of the philosophy of life envisaged by the Tamil sage Tiruvalluvar. For, it is the principle of Karma which is nothing but the collective effects of one's deeds, virtuous or vicious, that governs the life process of the soul. This process is technically known as transmigration. When the soul practises through the given body, of moral virtues of righteousness and love, then there is certainty of happiness in the present life as well as the assurance for a better life in the future. It is in that perspective, the family order of life is advocated as the most suitable one for self-realisation and salvation. Though other orders of life have also the same goals yet they also depend for their practices on the family order. Therefore the family order acquires greater importance and dignity. This is further illustrated in the next part where the householder plays the host to the guests of all walks of life.

HOSPITALITY

According to Tiruvalluvar the function and purpose of the family order of life is not only the procreation of worthy and wise children ; more so, it is to extend the most cordial welcome of hospitality to the guests and pilgrims that seek shelter under its roof.[90] Though it is true that hospitality includes providing food and shelter to the guests, it is not exclusively that aspect that is considered important. For that kind of provisions could be made only by the wealthy. But, what the Tamil sage has recommended is for all people. And there are virtues applicable to all people and hospitality is one of them. Therefore hospitality is essentially a virtuous attitude by the host to the guests. This is clearly explained by Tiruvalluvar. For it is said, lovingly the Goddess of wealth ever adorns with her gracious presence the hearts and homes of those, who honour their guests with a countenance of gentle smile.[91] Those families practising this noble virtue of hospitality never diminish in their fame and name. This is why Tiruvalluvar asks, is there a home that falls on evil days which is hallowed by the presence of guests that daily pour in ? [92]. It is easy to answer this question, because we have enough evidences of the famous names of philanthropists of ancient Tamils, namely Pari, Ori, Kari and others.

As a matter of fact, the names of Pari and others refer to wealthy families and they could afford to be generous, as they were, in extending hospitality to guests. But how about ordinary people with limited means ? In fact this question is borne in mind by Tiruvalluvar. For this is evident from the following observations made by him. Even unsown, the fields of him rustle with the rich waves of corn that first regales his guests and then feeds on what remains.[93] In other words, whatever may be the means of a family, if a certain part of their livelihood is kept apart for the guests and the remaining is used for themselves then they are said to be living, not only a just and moral life but also a life of service and regard for others. Obviously hospitality comprehends all those virtues. That is why the emphasis is laid

on that virtue. The emphasis reaches its glorious height when it is said let him not eat even it may be ambrosia, when the guest is waiting for him.[94]

Evidently we find how Tiruvalluvar combines realism with supernaturalism. For ambrosia is the divine food so to speak, capable of giving eternal life known as immortality. Even such a food should not be consumed selfishly according to Tiruvalluvar. In other words, if an householder shares what he has, with the guests and continues to welcome those to come, shall be the honoured guest among the gods.[95] Here we could perceive the sublime truth of present life linked with future life. This is what is mentioned earlier, the combination of realism — present life with supernaturalism — future life. Faith in the future life is an accepted view of the Tamils. It is to achieve that future goal of salvation, human endeavour through various orders of life is directed. Human endeavours virtuously performed with strict discipline go beyond our estimations owing to their spiritual significance. For it is said that the results of practice of hospitality cannot be measured; if done so, it could be done only with reference to the nature of guests![96]

Having explained the spiritual significance of the virtue of hospitality, Tiruvalluvar brings home to us the plight of the non-observers of the same virtue. As a matter of fact, the practice of hospitality involves a certain amount of sacrifice. Miserly minded people will not part with any minimum amount of their wealth. But so much hardly earned wealth is certainly subject to diminution in the long run. So, once that wealth the only thing they earned vanishes, they have none with them. They will cry desperately for their utter helplessness.[97] This is why the virtue of hospitality is insisted to be practised at home. It is said to be a duty as well for the wealthy. For if the wealthy do not practise charity at home, then they are playing the roles of fools[98] according to Tiruvalluvar. Here again, the Tamil sage insists on attitude than material provisions from the host to the guests. For it is pointed out that the anicha flower — a very sensitive flower — fades and faints before the breath of man, even so does a heart sink within itself that meets the cold welcome look of the host![99]

KIND WORDS

We have seen how Tiruvalluvar insisted more on the attitude than on giving substantial provisions from the host to the guests with reference to the practice of hospitality. This point of view is further stressed in the present chapter on the use of kind words. For it is said that lovelier than the gift flowing from the fulness of heart is a kind word that graces the lips of a cheerful guest.[100] This much of emphasis laid on the purity of heart and expression is due to the fact that it is the basic principle of moral life. For truth and kindness are the two sides of moral life. Where there is a gracious smile, a kindly look and a sweet word, flowing spontaneously from a heart true, there righteousness reigns supreme.[101] A man of such a calibre is naturally loved by all and there could be a stream of guests visiting him generally. All this is possible owing to his attitude towards others. Such a person rarely becomes a victim of poverty. For it is said that poverty which aggravates man's woes, never clouds the happiness of one, who speaks kind words to all.[102]

As a mater of fact, the Tamils were fond of wearing ornaments both men and women. Those ornaments were made up of gold, silver, shells, etc. But they are all external ornaments. Tiruvalluvar prescribes moral ornaments which ought to be practised in the family order of life. For instance humility and kind words are said to be the twin ornaments worthy of praise.[103] Through this statement it is abundantly clear that ornaments made up of metals, however precious they may be, are not worthy of praise. It is the moral ornaments that could proclaim the greatness of the person. For, in him the forces of evils decline and thereby grow from strength to strength in virtues of righteousness and kind words.[104] It is this moral strength which

glorifies not only the present life but also it sustains the future life. The Tamil sage asks what kindles the spark of righteousness in man and lights up the path beyond his grave? It is the kind word that unifies humanity and brings peace and good will.[105] Such a person is a blessing not only to humanity on earth but to gods in heaven as well. For it is said that blessings await him both on earth and in heaven, from whose lips fall harmless and artless words of kindness.[106]

Having explained at length the moral efficacy of kind words in our expressions in dealing with other fellow-beings, Tiruvalluvar poses a pertinent question. That is, that we realise the worthiness of kind words in whichever context might it be to be used and benefitted. Why people lose sight of this truth? In the form of an answer to this question, the Tamil sage puts another question as follows. What would it profit a man to be bitter of tongue who has seen the charm and delight of the gentle and kind speech?[107] In other words by using harsh words, neither the person benefits nor anybody enjoys it. Apart this, why people go for harsh words? For there are enough sweet words by using that we could make life worthwhile. Instead, why people choose the unsuitable and unprofitable words and expression? This sad plight is aptly described by Tiruvalluvar as follows: Behold the man of harsh tongue spoiling the charms of pleasant discourse! He is like the pitiable one, who longs for the unripe fruits, while the perfectly ripe ones are ready at hand![108].

It is worthwhile to delve into the depth of the virtue of speaking kind words. Tiruvalluvar has given both the negative and positive consequences of speaking harsh and kind words respectively. Once we perceive the truth that there is the greatest benefit in speaking kind words, then it is 'a must' that we have to practise. For it is also explained that only through kind words, one's mind also is cleansed of evil forces. Only in that

way there could be the avenue of realisation effectively. For with an impure heart, however one may try it could only be in vain in any of higher achievements. In fact it is for higher and nobler achivements if not in one life period, through several but more and more spiritualised forms of life, we conduct ourselves a morally disciplined life through the family order. And for this noble purpose, purity of heart and mind are essential. What flows freely from such a pure heart is the kind words. One who acquires this mental poise is a seer of Truth. This is what the Tamil sage also proclaims : What are the kind and sweet words but the guileless expressions of the love of noble and pure heart that has grasped the light of Truth.[109].

GRATITUDE

When the virtue of kindness expresses impartially towards all human beings, it is known as gratitude. It may be pointed out that it is in this way of practising virtues impartially the householder elevates himself from narrow limitations. For, once he starts showing kindness other than his family members, then itself he has easily crossed the barrier of kith and kin. This does not mean evading family relationships and responsibilities. Contrary to that it means recognition of them and through them recognising wider relationships of humanity. This is why, Tiruvalluvar emphasises at this juncture of the family order of life the practice of gratitude. For he says that all the riches of the heaven and the earth are too poor a compense for an act of kindness shown impartially.[110]

Modern ethical writers insist on the performance of selfless or disinterested duties, so that it could help both the giver and the given. As a matter of fact to do one's duty is not only helping himself but also of the others. It is this spirit of regard for others that is clearly implied in the virtue of gratitude. For, when one does help to others and at the same time asserts not for what he has done, that is what is meant by impartiality. In this act of benevolence, the doer expects no reward for his act. It is this kind of mental purity with which one performs an act of charity claims the approbation of the world. For, Tiruvalluvar points out that a benefit confered without any thought of reward outweighs the treasures of the deep sea[111]. While such is the greatness of the act of impartial help rendered to fellow brethren, if such an help reaches one in his pressing need, then the nobility of that act reaches the zenith of glory as well. For it is proclaimed that a gleam of favour, however little may it be shown impartially in the hour of one's pressing needs, transcends the glory of the whole world.[112]

There is a general maxim, 'Help the helpless.' A critical student of moral studies may be tempted to ask the pertinent question, 'how much'? A careful teacher could give the

answer, 'as much as you can.' This amounts to say that whatever may be the quantum of help one renders, it could be measured if done so, not with reference to the giver but with reference to the receiver. For Tiruvalluvar speaks that rarely does the kindly act rendered a measure of its own worth prove; for it is the nobility of the receiver who could fathom it.[113] The Tamil sage has not stopped with this generalisation. He has further clarified by making the issue more simplified. For he points out that in the eyes of the discerning, the gift as small as a mustard seed, grows in height like a stately palm tree.[114] Here we find how Tiruvalluvar combines in his exposition of sublime truth, realism with poetic imagination. The comparison and contrast of mustardseed and palm tree with reference to their sizes and significance of how a small favour grows in stature when it reaches from the giver to the receiver is a clear testimony of the fertility of poetic genius of Tiruvalluvar.

Tiruvalluvar makes an eloquent condemnation of ingratitude. He goes to that extent of saying that ingratitude is another term for injustice. For he says that it is good to chase away atonce the rankling thought of an injury received, but to forget an act of kindness is ignoble.[115] In other words, a person who has helped in many ways could have also committed errors and thereby harmed to some extent. In such a situation, which are quite common in our daily life, the advice is given that only the timely help rendered should be remembered. If we ask, what about the injuries done, the Tamil sage gives the shortest answer: forget it then and there. This may sound impracticable. But truly it is more practicable. For it is explained that the sting of the injury done however deadly may it be is gone when we gratituously recollect one former act of grace.[116]

The emphasis laid on gratitude reaches its culmination when Tiruvalluvar makes the most eloquent observation such as the following one. It is said that there is still hope left for men, guilty of every other crime, but the ungrateful ones shall never obtain salvation.[117] Incidentally it may also be noted how Tiruvalluvar makes a specific mention of 'sons who forget their

gratitude.' Though the general condemnation that the ungrateful ones shall never obtain salvation fits the situation, more suitably it fits the sons who forget their gratitude to their parents. This possibility of two reasonable interpretations for the same observation reminds us only the poetic imagination and philosophic vision of Tiruvalluvar.

According to Tiruvalluvar the moral fervour of gratitude not only pervades the span of present life of the wise, but continues for the future as well. For, the Tamil sage explains that through all their wanderings from birth to birth, do the wise carry the sacred memory of those who have wiped out their sorrows on earth through acts of grace.[118] It should be noted how Tiruvalluvar mentions, in this connection the 'seven cycles of births.' The Tamil tradition believes in the passage of soul from one form of life to another according to the nature of the good and evil deeds done in the previous life. This is known as transmigration or rebirth. In this process the guiding principle is known as karma. According to the nature of karma or past deeds, the forms of life and the formation of physical dispositions etc, are availed. When a person practises only virtues in the family order of life or even other orders of life suited to his temperaments, he is naturally entitled to acquire better things not only in the present life but also in the lives to come. So much so, bearing in mind all such philosophical implications, Tiruvalluvar shows us the simplest way of life, if I may say so, the religious life to be lived in the proper way, so that salvation is certain to be achieved. This is why the Tamil sage advises, as a practical approach, seek the fellowship of the holy ones; when you are well-off forsake not those who did cling to you in the days of your needs.[119]

EQUITY

Human relationships are based on moral virtues of righteousness, honesty, kindness and compassion. Whenever those virtues are either ignored or evaded, then we could clearly perceive disruptions of human relationships. In a way, this kind of a confused atmosphere evidently prevails in modern times. It is not difficult to cure this malady. For we have enough teachings from Tiruvalluvar not only to avoid disruptions of human relationships but also to establish ideal atmosphere. How could this be achieved? The answer is simple. For it is the change of mind and the resultant change of attitude towards dealing human problems. When the individual personality recognises the dignity of other fellowbeings and treats them whithout any bias whatsoever then there is certainly the avenue for brotherhood and peaceful existence. To create this ideal atmosphere in the social life, the individual must create in him mental poise and equity. Tiruvalluvar points out that the crown of man's virtue is the uprightness at heart and his unbiased attitude towards other fellow-beings.[120] The Tamil sage also refers to a striking illustration. For instance it is said that that person is a thriving merchant among his tribesmen, who jealously guards other's property and wealth as his own.[121] The employment of the example of a merchant is worthy of our attention. For, a thriving merchant could grow in prosperity only by practising fairness in his dealings with the customers. Here also not all the customers are of the same calibre. Therefore fairness of dealing means, dealing with various kinds of people in such a manner that every customer is satisfied. In such fairness of transactions, there could not be partiality or prejudice shown to any one. This is what we mean by equity. By the practice of equity everybody is satisfied and happy.

Thus we find the workability of the principle of equity, the practice of which alone enables the formation of perfect human relationships. In that ideal society everyone, irrespective of different pursuits of life, is thriving and therefore is above wants.

As this thriving is based on the principle of fairness so it is justified. Otherwise it cannot, nay, should not be justified. For Tiruvalluvar says spurn ill-gotten gains, though profit may accrue from them as wealth, it deserves to be despised on that day itself.[122] This much of severity shown by the Tamil sage towards ill-gotten wealth deserves to be studied carefully in our times. However, Tiruvalluvar condemns ill-gotten wealth, not only because of its nature of unfairness but also due to the fact that it is not permanent. For wealth acquires permanence and also increases only when it is acquired through fair means. For the Tamil sage speaks in clear terms that it is only the wealth of the just and noble that undiminishingly grows as well as flows from generation to generations.[123] Only in this way accumulated wealth made the renowned philanthropists like Pari, Ori and others of the ancient Tamils. Understood in this perspective, Tiruvalluvar gives the verdict that the noble and the wicked are known by their progeny.[124] As a mater of fact, progeny though refers exclusively to the children of a family, yet it includes what all had been left behind like wealth etc, by parents.

It is a natural occurrence in our day to day transactions that there are losses and gains, whatever may be one's vocation. But those ups and downs of life should not have their influences on the steadfast practices of virtues. That is way Tiruvalluvar points out that loss and gain are the natural aspects of life; but the possession of a pure heart consistently is the glory of the wise.[125] As a matter of fact, the possession of purity of mind may not be accompanied by possession of wealth as well. Yet the former is hailed as the glory of the wise. For it is also justified that poverty of the just is no badge of disgrace to the wise.[126] In a way wisemen willingly embrace poverty lest their minds get polluted by wealth and fame. For wealth and fame have the potential powers of corrupting humanity and thereby make them deviate from righteousness and equity. This is why Tiruvalluvar speaks eloquently that the creeping thought of inequity portends the ruin of a soul.[127] In other words, the Tamil sage asks, what is the benefit of possessing the world when you cannot possess yourself? To put it in simple terms, why should man become a victim of the allurements of the perishable material wealth and thereby lose sight of the imperishable, soul?

Obviously we find through these expositions sublime truths of philosophical significance set forth. For it is the self-realisation for which alone moral order of life becoms purposive and meaningful. Acquisitions of wealth etc. are only instrumental for the ultimate goals of self-realisation and salvation. Therefore whatever may be the instrumental efficacy of wealth, fame etc, if they happen to be hindrances for acquiring mental purity, then they deserve only condemnation as Tiruvalluvar has done it accordingly.

Tiruvalluvar takes special attention to draw our attention to the importance of acquiring poise of mind and purity of heart. For it is only under such an internal poise, wisdom could flourish and justice could prevail. That is why the truth is set in the form of a question: Where does justice reside, but in measured words, springing from an upright heart within?[128] Thus when a person acquires the balance of mind so to speak, then he claims the privilege not only having acquired equity and so is a personal benefit, but also setting an example to others. This is clearly described with an apt illustration by Tiruvalluvar. For it is said that the boast of the wise is the mind steady as are the well poised pair of scales.[129] Evidently the well-poised pair of scales apart from measuring perfectly, set an ideal standard of measurement as such. Similar is the case of a person having acquired perfection through steadfast practice of virtues through the family order of life.

SELF - RESTRAINT

Tiruvalluvar gives the place of honour to the virtue of self-restraint particularly at this juncture. For it is not easy to be practised without earlier possession of simpler virtuous dispositions. Self-restraint as a virtue imposes restrictions on external acts as well as internal dispositions. The significance of this virtue could be better understood through the consequences of its non-observation. For it is in that way Tiruvalluvar brings home to us the nobility of this virtue. For instance, he points out that a person may keep open all the other doors of the senses, but let him beware of an unbridled tongue; for through its slip remorse enters the heart.[130] There is a traditional saying that the boneless tongue could turn in any manner. In other words, unless we are cautious we may easily fall a victim to the slips of tongue. Though later we may apologise for it, still it does not solve squarely the problem. For the Tamil sage reminds us that a blister by burning time may heal, but the sting of a cruel-word due to the slip of tonuge, ever rankles in the human heart.[131] In the same mood of deep concern for the drastic consequences of the slips of tongue, Tiruvalluvar points out that even all the good deeds done by him turn into a bundle of vices before the slip of an unpleasant word that pricks the conscientious ones.[132]

Thus we understand how important as well as imperative it is to keep control over the tongue. Once we acquire that feat, then our moral progress of life is hastened. For Tiruvalluvar says, of its own accord the path of righteousness opens before the wiseman who through the practice of virtues and learning keeps watch over the senses and thereby conquers the giant passions of pride and anger.[133] The moral efficacy and spiritual value of controlling the senses and their beneficial results are futher explained through an apt analogy. For it is said that the wise-man having controlled the senses, like the tortoise, possesses firmness of mind, which enables him to calm down the tumult of the senses in the vast silence of its being; this benefit of the present life is carried through all its round of births, wherein

it maintains a shield against the slings and arrows of fortune.[134] Evidently we find the greatest utility of practices of virtues and the possession of wisdom as they help us not only the present life but also the future lives to come. Incidentally it may also be noted how Tiruvalluvar mentions the seven–fold births, only to emphasise the significance of leading virtuous life. For, only the virtues as moral forces follow the soul in its journey through different forms of life. This is why it is reminded, guard as your treasure the power of self-control; for the soul has no greater gain on earth.[135]

Evidently we find how distinctions are recognised among people with reference to their personalities. Modern psychological studies also maintain individual differences due to those personalities constituted of different traits. However the distinctions maintained by Tiruvalluvar specifically refer to the moral virtues constituting those personalities. The ethical terminologies like charater, conduct etc. could be appropriately applied to the moral personalities distinguished one from the other as high or higher directly with reference to the practice of virtues. For the Tamil sage points out, that more imposing than the grandeur of a mountain is the moral personality who subdues his rebellious senses and swerves not from the virtuous path of duty.[136] Such being the grandeur of a moral personality, if he possesses wealth in addition to other virtues including self-control, then he is said to have acquired the crown of perfection. For it is said that to be humble is a good and gracious disposition for all; in the case of the wealthy, it is the crown of virtues.[137]

Thus the greatness of a person is measured by the fact of the virtuous life that he lives. He raises his dignity to spiritual heights only by steadfast adherence to the practice of virtues. For this noble end, self-control is an essential virtue. For, Tiruvalluvar points out that endless glory adorn the personality who knows that self-control leads to wisdom and therefore practises it steadfastly.[138] Such purified personalities acquire the permanent place in the memory of humanity and thereby become the immortals. Obviously the Tamil sage is combining realism with supernaturalism, perhaps in his characteristic way. However realism is thicker than supernaturalism owing to Tiruvalluvar's

adherence to rationalism. For it is said how self-control leads to sovereign power and makes the son of man one with the immortals. But it is also added how an ill-governed passion hurls him down to the shades of endless gloom.[139]. By emphasising more of realism and rationalism, Tiruvalluvar remains a true guide to humanity towards divinity.

DISCIPLINE

Tiruvalluvar has given the most important place for the family order of life owing to the significance that the family institution is the nurturing ground, of moral and spiritual virtues. Now, the Tamil Sage outlines the important virtues to be practised while the corresponding vices which ought to be given up. Removal of those vices is the primary task in the moral journey of the individual life. For, then alone it provides the healthy atmosphere therein at the family institution wherein those virtues could thrive. That is why Tiruvalluvar reeommends at this juncture, a disciplined life, for it is only through discipline both vices could be eradicated and virtues could be cultivated. The Tamil sage points out, just like the envious ones could not acquire wealth so also the disciplined life of dignity is not for men of ignoble conduct.[140] In other words, persons who lead a disciplined life alone could be enabled to maintain purity of conduct and thus enjoy the higher life of dignity. Therefore all honours go to the shining host of men of noble conduct ; the ignobles acquire only disgrace, hence they are fallen.[141] From these observations Tiruvalluvar makes it abundantly clear that if a distinction is to be maintained, as modern ethical writers do, of higher and lower beings among humanity, it is to be done on the basis of the kind of disciplined life people live. The more disciplined a life they live the higher they go up in the ladder of moral and spiritual virtues and values respectively. Similarly the more indisciplined life people live the worse levels of ignominy they reach. Realising this truth, men of noble calibre never turn away from the disciplined life of right conduct, dreading the unfathomable depth of disgrace ensuing the life of indiscipline.[112]

As a matter of act, purity of conduct could ensue only from purity of heart. Purity of heart could be acquired through disciplined life. Therefore the practice of virtues and purity of conduct are interdependent. In fact. Tiruvalluvar exactly means it when he points out that right conduct is the seed of virtue, but an evil one is the mother of endless owes.[143] This

is why every moment of their lives is looked upon with deep concern by disciplined persons of noble disposition. For even in the unguarded moments of their lives, never do evil words slip out of the tongues of men of unblemished conduct.[144] Therefore it is no more an exaggeration to say that such a noble life has priceless value as it brings with it honour and glory. However, the Tamil sage goes one step forward when he says that purity of conduct through disciplined life leads to honour and therefore it is more valuable than life as such.[145] This does not mean life has no value. But life acquires value only through living along virtuous path. Only to stress the significance of virtuous pursuits in life, the idea of just living is subordinated to the better idea of living well. Thereby life acquires meaning and thus secures glory and honour.

Both as an advice as wellas a warning, Tiruvalluvar says keep perpetual vigilance on your conduct, for it is the only ally the sages in deep meditation have found for the onward march of the spiritual life of man.[146] The pursuit of right couduct is an imperative on the part of a seeker after Truth. For it is said that true nobility is the very stuff of right conduct; but an evil course drags a man down to the lowliest.[147] Thus the imperative nature of the pursuit of right conduct becomes clear. For otherwise, man, instead of going up and up in the higher ladder of humanity towards divinity goes down and down below in the ladder of animality towards ignorance and evil. To choose the former path of life is the mark of rationality and the later would naturally be the mark of irrationality. The path of reason is a 'must' for all rational beings. So much so, we could say with clarity of conviction that to lead the virtuous life of disciplined conduct is the duty of man and woman. One's duty is decided by his vocation in social life. When he fails to carry out his duty then he falls from manness to meanness. Tiruvalluvar explains it with specific illustrati on. It is said that if a Brahmin forgets the spiritual values, it could be excused, for he

could re-learn it. But if fails to perform his duty then the noble status enjoyed by his family will diminish towards deterioration.[148] From this specific illustration, the Tamil sage makes it abundantly clear that even vast learning will not stand good unless the person does his duty and thus lives amicably with his fellowbrethren. This point of view is setforth in the form of a question of what avail is the vast learning of man, if he does not dwell in harmony with the world.[149]

NON-COVETOUSNESS

The ideas of disciplined life, virtuous conduct etc, remain abstract and empty unless they are related with practical, human relationships. As we have seen already, how Tiruvalluvar remains more a realist than an idealist in guiding humanity, so in conformity with that noble foundation of his work, he substantiates moral maxims with practical contexts. The virtue of non-covetousness and the vice of covetousness are clearly explained, with apt illustrations. For it is explained that a person alive to the glory of wealth and grandeur of virtues should not commit the folly of coveting that woman, who, by the moral privilege of wedlock is rightly the joy of another man[150]. If the Tamil sage would have chosen either property or other belongings of a neighbour as not to be the objects of covetousness, it would have lost the charm of humane context. It acquires not only charm but also a moral significance, when the example is of a wedded woman ! And to speak on that most difficult moral issue through a complete chapter of ten couplets, I am unable to distinguish the greatness of Tiruvalluvar from the grandeur of the subject of discussion proper. For, the expressions used by the Tamil sage on this topic of absorbing interest as well as instruction are terse and straight to the points. For, instance it is mentioned that among the fallen there is no greater fool than he who crawls to his neighbour's wife with the covetous mind.[151] Tiruvalluvar further asks what avails the pomp of the greatness of a man of renown, if he commits adultery, unmindful of the infamy in store for him ?[152] Realism reaches its climax when the Tamil sage observes that though alive, he is dead, who commits the breach of trust conscientiously and covets his neighbour's wife.[153] However, Tiruvalluvar adds idealism to the climax through the following statement. Coveting the neighbour's wife though may be viewed by the villain as a short cut to enjoy life, shall bring unto him eternal damnation.[154] Realism and idealism reach their perfect harmony in the practical humanism of Tiruvalluvar. For, the sage sums up all those vices that stand

in queue at the door of the adulterer: Hatred, sin, dread and infamy ever dog the steps of an adulterer.[155]

Thus having explained at length the vices of the act of coveting one's neighbour's wife, Tiruvalluvar brings home to us the nature of a virtuous life. It is said that that person is a virtuous householder who lusts not after a woman who belongs to another man.[156] This act of nobility is looked upon an heroic deed as well. For the Tamil sage proclaims that the heroic manhood which turns away from the charms of a woman belonging to the neighbour is not mere virtue, it is the core of perfection.[157] As a matter of fact, Tiruvalluvar looks upon the virtue of non-covetousness so high that it yields to man when practised, perfection in life. That is why the sage asks, even though the householder may not practise other virtues of Justice, let him not covet his neighbour's wife[158] For all the good things of the earth encircled by the dread sea, verily belong unto the noble one, who clasps not the arm of the spouse of the neighbour.[159]

FORBEARANCE

As the aim of the family order of life is to secure moral perfection in life and the spiritual salvation ultimately, so the requisite virtues have been setforth so far. The practices of virtues, however are not free from obstacles particularly in the order of family life. This is evident from the fact of the several responsibilities, the house-holder is entitled. In the discharge of his duties, for instance as a father, husband, friend and yet more respective roles, the house-holder is naturally met with conflicts and frustrations. It is to avoid such of those psychological tensions and at the sametime continue the practices of virtues uninterrupted, the shield of armour is recommended by Tiruvalluvar for the house-holder. That shield of armour is the virtue of forbearance. For it is pointed out that it is the unbending spirit of tolerance that guards the perfection of one's being.[160]

As a matter of fact, the strength of one's tolerance towards others is expressed through acts of kindness and considerateness. The moral fervour of the virtue of forbearance is explained through an homely illustration. Tiruvalluvar says that there is poverty within poverty; that is the poverty of the house-holder who shuts the doors to a stranger. Similarly there is strength within strength; that is the strength of those who forgive the folly of the ignorant.[161] The Tamil sage does not stop with this instructive illustration of the moral virtue of forgiveness. For he adds, to forgive an insult through the moral strength of toleration is an act of nobility; but nobler still is to forget the insult once for all![162] Evidently we find how Tiruvalluvar adds chivalry to realism and idealism. For we hear from modern social reformers such of those maxims as 'forgive and forget' and also think that those maxims are modern ideas. But this is spoken by Tiruvalluvar, as a requisite virtue of our

dealings in social life, nearly two thousand years ago! Should I add anything more to remind the readers the modernity of moral ideas of the Tamil sage? To answer now itself would be making only an hasty generalisation. For there are yet more pearls we have to pick up from the unfathomable treasure of Tirukkural! Here is one. Behold the earth, holding in her lap the person who delves deep into her; even so the noble ones bear with those who revile them; for forbearance is the crown of virtues, thus speaks Tiruvalluvar.[163]

Tiruvalluvar further explains the statement that forbearance is the crown of virtues. For, the person who retaliates insults gains the personal gratification for the day. But the one who tolerates, gains the fame and name which could stand forever. It is said that the joy of revenge is only for a day; but the glory of forbearance is eternal in this world of ours.[164] In other words, such noble souls are honoured by humanity for all times to come. Whereas those people who believed in acts of revenge are neither remembered nor even recognised by humanity. For they are mere chaff among men due to their unforgiving nature; but the purest gold they are who forgive and forget. That is why they are recognised, remembered and honoured for all times by all people.[165] A pertinent question arises in this context, namely, is there not any limit to our attitude of toleration? The answer is certainly positive. For as human beings, we are all limited, though that limitation may vary from person to person. However, when inhuman attitudes are displayed openly, how will it be possible to either forgive or forget? Realising the gravity of the human situation, Tiruvalluvar appeals to the common sense of humanity. The Tamil sage pleads, avenge not the wrongs ever so great for the well-being of your perfection; but bless them that curse you; for they know not what they do.[166]

The counselling pleaded by Tiruvalluvar resembles the great message of Jesus Christ. Therefore some may think that that

act of forgiving could be applied only to sages and saints. But that is not the design of Tiruvalluvar. For, as mentioned earlier, Tiruvalluvar is a guide to human beings, men and women and not exclusively of saints and sages. Though the Tamil sage appeals for the act of forgiveness, yet as a realist, in case of extreme acts of meanness, he recommends the employment of cleverness, in solving amicably human problems. He advises, conquer by the nobility of your being those who have taunted you in their insolent pride.[167] Thus in the midst of constant conflicts, the house-holder continues to practise virtues and that is why, the family order of life acquires the greatest significance. So it is said that great is the sage in his saffron robes; greater still is the house-holder who tolerates the calumny of men.[168] Therefore proclaims Tiruvalluvar that even holier than the ascetics are those that bear with the slanderous tongue of their detractors.[169]

NON - ENVYING

Tiruvalluvar has already spoken of the importance of the purity of heart for the realisation of the best things in life. However, in the family order of life led by the house-holder, it is most likely that he could meet with practical problems and difficult situations. That kind of an atmosphere may lead to entertain enmity towards others. It is in that perspective, Tiruvalluvar brings home to us of the dangerous consequences of entertaining this potential vice, enmity. For the Tamil sage reminds us when one's heart is filled with enmity, no other external enemy is necessary for his fall, for the inherent enemy itself shall bring that without failing.[170] Tiruvalluvar further says that when it is known of an householder's envious designs the goddess of wealth deserts him and sends her sister, the goddess of poverty to dwell with him.[171] Through this homely observation, the Tamil sage reveals only the traditional views of the ancient Tamils. As a matter of fact, even in our times, we hear this kind of views particularly from the orthodox Hindu families. Thus it is envy that paves the way to a man's ruin, and plunges him into the fires of poverty-stricken life on earth.[172]

The dangerous consequences of entertaining enmity are not only confined to the individual sufferings but it extends to his childern as well. This is why, Tiruvalluvar warns, be not envious of the charities done unto others, lest your children should be the victims, of the trails and tribulations of life.[173] Thus having summed up the resultant hazards and hardships of an envious heart, the Tamil sage puts the question: Could an envious heart ever dream of honour or wealth?[174] The simple answer is 'certainly not'. Therefore entertaining enmity at heart is nothing but a deliberate act of committing suicide. This is

what Tiruvalluvar says: the wise commit not evil out of envy; for they know that envy is the deadliest of sins.[175]

Tiruvalluvar expresses his conviction that the envious ones could neither achieve glory in their lives, nor the non-envious ones fall from their higher status of spiritual life.[176] However, as a realist, the Tamil sage cuts a note of warning. For he points out that the riches of the envious and the poverty of the non-envious and righteous are matters for the serious consideration of the wise.[177] This is what is meant by a proportionate combination of realism, idealism and rationalism. In other words, Tiruvalluvar neither ignores the reality of life nor of its idealism. However he combines them on the basis of rationality of man. Therein lies the genius of Tiruvalluvar, as a guide to mankind as a whole! Thus to make man as he ought to be, Tiruvalluvar advises, be on your guard against the creeping envious thoughts; verily freedom from envy is one of the basic laws of your moral being.[178] The Tamil sage reminds not only the householder but all human beings to be free from enmity. For there is no blessing greater on earth than freedom from envy.[179].

NON - COVETING

We have seen already how Tiruvalluvar has explained the virtue of non-covetousness with reference to the vice of coveting one's neighbour's wife. Now, the Tamil sage discusses at length of the vices of coveting everything belonging to other fellow brethren. For persons begin with one vice do not stop with that. They add one over the other and thus get into the vicious circle of vices. That is why, Tiruvalluvar asks: Of what avail is a sensitive mind filled with knowledge, if it slips into shameless acts through blind coveting of everything belonging to others? [180] The sage himself answers the question. For he opines that such ill-gotten possessions neither live longer nor do they help in time, the covetous one. It is said, desire not another man's possessions; for, no good purpose is served by ill-gotten wealth.[181]

It should be noted that Tiruvalluvar condemns only the coveted wealth and not wealth as such. In other words, wealth must be acquired through just and righteous means. So also it should be possessed by him rightly. Thus the ownership of private belonging is fully recognised by the Tamil sage. For it is clearly mentioned: behold the man who is free from covetousness; he knows no diminution of his wealth.[182] This means that the wealthy ones should also be righteous. That is why the Tamil traditions have honoured the wealthy ones, not only for their wealth but more so for their righteousness, benevolence and charity shown to the people at large. This is what Tiruvalluvar means when he says only on him fortune smiles, who having trained along the path of virtues, guards his soul against covetousness.[183]

Thus in the family order of life, the acquisition of wealth, as a necessary factor for sustenance, is justified. But with the acquisition of wealth, there is also the danger of misusing it in the pursuit of pleasure. This is why, the Tamil sage directly refers to that kind of life where could become pleasure as the

guiding principle and thereby block them from the attainment of spiritual blessing and salvation. For achieving salvation, the moral conditions laid down are clear enough. For it is stated that they commit not evil through the enjoyments of coveted possessions, who aspire for their salvation.[184] In other words, when the householder due to acquisition of wealth goes away from the righteous path of family order of life, then he cannot claim to achieve the spiritual blessing. For spiritual blessing could be availed not by the possession of wealth but by the possession of oneself. This is further explained by Tiruvalluvar when he says: out of poverty they lust not after another's possession, who possess the poise of mind born through the control of the senses.[185] As a matter of fact, the controlling of senses is an essential aspect of self-realisation. To acquire self-control, what is required is only the pursuit of virtues and the rejection of vices hitherto explained. Understood in that sense, the family order of life could also be viewed as an experiment in that process of self-control for both man and woman.

Thus in the moral order of the family institution, the householder through strict adherence to the practices of virtues, progresses up and up. And in that spiritual progress, self-control adds charm and grace. However, when there is any deviation from the path of righteousness, then the fall becomes a certainty. For Tiruvalluvar reminds us: Behold the man who walks along virtues hungering for the grace of God; he too shall perish if he plots against another through covetousness.[186] Therefore whoever may it be, if they are covetous at heart then they are fallen; if they are non-covetous at heart then they are victorious. For the blind greed of man spells his ruin; but he who is free from it triumphs over all vicissitudes of life.[187]

So much so, from all those references of the futility of covetousness at heart what we need is only the purity of heart and the fairness of judgment in our aspirations and associations. Only then dignity of the moral order of life of the householder is sustained. Otherwise infamy and evil surround him and thereby spoil the spiritual nature of the family order of life. This is what the Tamil sage reminds us: behold the person who strays

away from the righteous course and covets with an evil heart another man's well-earned riches; certainly he falls a prey to endless evils and thus spoils his home.[188] Therefore it is an imperative on the part of the householders to maintain the moral dignity of the family order of life through the sustained effort of keeping the heart pure in the practice of virtues. For it is pointed out that through lust of gain they covet not who blush at an unjust act.[189]

REFRAIN FROM SLANDER

Generally it is looked down upon, when people speak ill of others, particularly in their absence. The virtue of a person lies in the fact that he counts only the good aspects in the nature of people. Therefore counting the weaknesses of others and speak ill of them are only the many sided nature of vice. And exposing human weaknesses and also speak ill of them, in the absence of the persons concerned, is an act of meanness whoever indulges in it. According to Tiruvalluvar such acts betray only the meanness of a sweet-tongued slanderer.[190] It does not stop with revealing meanness of the slanderer. It acquires publicity as well. That is why the Tamil sage warns : Beware of slandering, lest your faults should be exposed to the scorn of the world ![191] Thereby it is made crystal clear that speaking ill of others benefits nobody including the unfortunate slanderer ! Therefore if there is any outcome of it, as certainly there is, it is only harmful in its nature. For it is pointed out: Behold the vile slanderer who sows the seeds of discord among brethren ; he knows not the sweet joys of friendship and fellowship.[192]

Tiruvalluvar takes an opportunity at this juncture, to apply the Socratic method of teaching. Socrates put questions to the youths of ancient Athens, pretending that he was ignorant of the answers. But after proving the ignorance of the youths, Socrates also gave the apt answers. Similarly, Tiruvalluvar places before the readers the following question: Will a slanderer who proclaims to the world the faults of his kith and kin, ever spare the enemy?[193] Evidently we know the answer is 'certainly not'. But does it mean Tiruvalluvar is ignorant of this answer? I have only to repeat again: 'Certainly not'. It is only to remind us the volatility of a slanderer whose diabolical act of speaking ill

of others stops nowhere, and spares nobody, the simple question is put. However, Tiruvalluvar makes a concession even to the slanderer. For it is said: 'talk your bitterest face to face, but slander not; for it is the source of all evils.[194]

Through the statement that the act of slander, as the source of all evils in life, Tiruvalluvar has made it abundantly clear the gravity of nature of slander. For as a potential vice, it disrupts all human relationships. It creates hatred and enmity among the nearer and the dearer. Such being the negative consequences of slander, it is deadlier than the act of injustice. This is what the Tamil sage means when he says: behold the man who is guilty of every other evil and knows not righteousness at all; even such a person could be excused if he slanders not![195] For the slanderer has no comparison among the villains. Similarly slander, could not be compared with other vices. Hence it is the crown of vices! Tiruvalluvar makes this truth evident from the observation that more hideous than the heart of a sinner is the deceitful smile of a slanderer.[196] For we could at least predict the conduct of a sinner, but we cannot do even that guess about the diabolical act implicit in the deceitful smile of a slanderer. This is why, the Tamil sage makes a thought-provoking appeal to the slanderer only in the interest of even his salvation! For it is said: prefer death to a life of deceit and slander; it is the only course open unto you for the welfare of your soul.[197]

Tiruvalluvar forgets not to display his poetic talents, even in an adverse atmosphere, as we find ourselves, of a confrontation with the slanderer. The Tamil sage shows the righteous path even to the slanderer to reach the goal of salvation. But even that process has to go through and therefore, the slanderer has yet to remain alive on earth. Would not it be a burden to bear with the villain of villains, for the mother earth? This question, we feel very strongly perhaps. Curiously enough Tiruvalluvar shows greater cognizance of this sensitive question and that is

what we perceive through his observation. Is it out of infinite grace that Mother earth bears on her bosom the tread of a slanderer?[198] Evidently we realise also the deep concern voiced by the Tamil sage for the slanderer. For it is not a condemnation to the Mother earth for bearing with the presence of the slanderer. On the other hand, it is looked upon as an act of grace! Conformity with the spirit of humanism, Tiruvalluvar not only shows deep concern for the slanderer, but also tries to reform him through the following optimistic note. As slanderer takes note of other's faults so also if he takes note of his faults as well, will it not be the best way of achieving happiness to one and all?[199] Certainly it shall be. Through this optimistic note Tiruvalluvar remains a true friend to all human beings, irrespective of their abilities to realise and recognise spiritual values.

REFRAIN FROM IDLE TALK

Whether it is the family order of life or even of the social order of life as a whole, its progress and happiness solely depend on the seriousness of purpose recognised and the sincerity of work put in by the people, individually and collectively. In this moral endeavour both at the levels of the family as well as the society, men and women should be more conscientious of their duties and responsibilities rather than of their rights or personal claims. This is a moral necessity which would stand as a check for indulging in idle talks. Most of the people take pride indulging in such idle conversations that in the later periods of their lives, having become victims to that unwholesome habit, spoil their career in several progressive aspects. Having realised the futility of idle talks, Tiruvalluvar points out that neither grace nor pleasure, nor any profit is there for him, who indulges in vain words.[200] The more that he indulges in such useless talks the more that he reveals the shallowness of his mind.[201] Tiruvalluvar goes another step forward in his condemnation, when he says that more repugnant than unkind acts towards friends is the vain boast of a fool.[202]

So much so, any person who indulges in vain talks becomes an object of disgust and thereby loses the social respect. That is why it is specifically mentioned that despised among men is he, who indulges in idle talk to the disgust of all.[203]. When people become victims to this moral lethargy, then they are no more to be distinguished either as the great or otherwise. For it is clearly stated how shorn of their honour and respect do even the great become if they yield to futile and fruitless talks. Thus having known the wastage of time, energy as well as the loss of social respect and recognition, if a person continues to indulge in acts of vain talks, then he does not even deserve to be recognised as a human being. For it is setforth without any reservation that a lover of idle talks is but the chaff among men.[204]

Tiruvalluvar turns his attention from the average persons to that of the wise. The wisemen are those whose thoughts are

directed towards higher principles governing the life of humanity. Their interests lie in the serious and systematic inquiry of the fundamentals of life. The word philosopher is an appropriate one for the wise. For the word philosopher is derived from the Greek terms philein and Sophia with the meaning lover and wisdom respectively. Thus philosophers truly engaged in the pursuit of higher virtues and values of life neither take interest in vain talks, nor they could accommodate themselves in such wordy duels. This applies only to those wisemen genuinely interested in knowing the meaning of life and the pursuit of better life etc. Having known the firmness of mind and the nobility of character of a true philosopher, Tiruvalluvar proclaims that such wisemen shall never engage in futile discussions and fruitless discourses.[206] However, to bring home to us the meaninglessness of idle talks, Tiruvalluvar goes to the extent of saying that even the wisemen, who never express hatred and violence, let talk harshly; but let them not indulge in idle talks.[207] As mentioned earlier, it is only to explain the uselessness of idle talks so, Tiruvalluvar, prayed the wise even to talk harshly. But, as we know, the wise neither indulge in harsh words nor in idle talks. If they do so, then they could not claim to be wise. This is what the Tamil sage means when he points out that never do the wise, who are equipped with the pure light of wisdom fall victims of vain talks even in their trying moments.[208]

Thus having reviewed the positions of men from the average to the wisest levels with reference to the futility of idle talks, Tiruvalluvar resumes his position of humanism. For he speaks now to humanity as a whole. Whether you are in the family order of life or in the other orders of life do not indulge in vain talks. Similarly, either you are a person with ordinary intellectual prowess or a person with full of spiritual wisdom, do not indulge in idle talks. Idle talk whoever makes is non-sense. Therefore the Tamil sage puts the whole truth in a nut-shell, let words of wisdom adorn your lips, but pray, refrain from futile and fruitless discourses and discussions.[209]

DREAD OF EVIL DEEDS

Tiruvalluvar ventures to discuss at length the most difficult part of moral principles with reference to the conduct of moral life of people. The Tamil sage has already explained some of the vices comparing with the virtues in the conduct of practical life. But at this matured stage of the spiritual life through the family order of the individual, Tiruvalluvar takes up the issue of vices in their totality and that is why they are known as evil deeds. Another aspect to be noted is, not only of not doing evil deeds but more so of not even entertaining any idea of evil at all. It is the later aspect which reveals Tiruvalluvar's moral insight into the depth of the problem. For we know evil in any form done is still an evil. So also through evil deeds, we get back evil consequences. Therefore from which ever angle we look at the issue of evil deeds, they stand for complete rejection. That is why ethical writers like Kant in modern times categorically insist that it is an imperative on the part of a rational being to do only good deeds and to do so also reject in toto all evil deeds. The rejection of doing evil deeds is also a categorical imperative.

Tiruvalluvar says evil breeds evil; therefore it is dreaded more than the scorching fires.[210] The analogy of fire to that of evil deeds is befitting. For, fire has the inherent potentiality of destruction. So also is the case with that of evil deeds. Wisdom helps man to perceive this truth, and thereby keep away from evils both in words and deeds. Indeed, the Tamil sage speaks quite eloquently of the virtue of the act of rejecting evil deeds. For it is the height of wisdom to resist evil deeds done even towards the evil ones.[211] Even due to moments of anger it is advised let him not entertain any evil designs. For it is pointed out, design not the ruin of another in an weary moment. For,

in that case of your excited action, righteousness will desert you and thereby you alone will fall in your design of evil.[212] Tiruvalluvar does not recognise poverty as an excuse for the practice of evil designs or deeds as the case may be. For it is specifically stressed, let poverty be no plea for committing evil, for evil deeds make you only poorer still![213] If people persist in entertaining still evil designs and thereby enter into evil deeds, then they are the most wicked ones. For hardened into sin, the wicked fear not the deadly nature of evil deeds, but the noble flee away even from such thoughts.[214]

Apart from the fact that the consequences of evil deeds affecting others in a deadly manner, they affect the same person who designs it. That is why, Tiruvalluvar makes such an eloquent commitment on this issue. In fact, the Tamil sage makes it abundantly clear how there is a way of escape even from the wrath of a deadly foe; but the effects of evil designs and deeds relentlessly pursue him down to utter ruin.[215] How do the evil effects pursue the designer is well illustrated through the most appropriate analogy. As the shadow follows the person who walks, so also the evil effects of his evil deeds walk in following every step therein.[216]

As the moral significance of the family order of life lies in its assurance of achieving happiness and salvation, so the house holder shall not entertain any evil design whatsoever. For it would stand on the way of his spiritual life. This is why Tiruvalluvar clearly states, commit not evil, for it would block the way for your salvation.[217] It means that when the house-holder is surrounded by evil forces due to his ignorance, he could not pursue the virtuous path of life. That would in the long run block the way for spiritual progress. This is further explained by Tiruvalluvar through the statement: for the well-being of yourself, namely for your salvation, raise not your guilty arm, against anybody.[218] This is a self-evident truth, which is acquired

through realisation of the deeper values of life. Therefore it is no more an exaggeration to say that the Tamil sage speaks for the benefit and betterment of mankind as a whole in their onward march towards the goal of happiness and salvation. Whichever path of life they may be pursuing, let them do so with purity of heart. Let them cleanse their minds of all evil thoughts and walk humbly in the righteous path.[219] They are certain and secured not only from the ills and imperfections of life but more so in the achievement of protection and salvation.

BENEVOLENCE

At this stage of life of the householder, the family institution no more remains a possession of exclusively the inmates of the household. In other words, it becomes a centre of altruism practised through virtues of common good. It is in that perspective Tiruvalluvar brings home to us of the social virtue of benevolence. In order to explain it adequately, the Tamil sage refers to the natural but impartial phenomenon of raining. He points out that the spirit of benevolence looks for no return; like the process of raining wherein the clouds delight the earth, with their gentle refreshing showers.[220] As pointed out, this is only an analogy to illustrate how the house–holder through the training of virtues acquires the spirit of benevolence and helps the guests and the pilgrims in all possible ways. If he is wealthy, in addition to his possession of spiritual wealth, the benefits are more to the people at large. With the fairness of exaggeration Tiruvalluvar says that only for the benefit of humanity do the noble gather and accumulate wealth, so that it could be helpful to the needy in their moments of necessity.[221]

The mention of the names of Pari, Ori and other philanthropists in the Sangam literature are standing examples of ideal forms of benevolence. As they acquired through virtuous means huge amounts of wealth, so also they helped whoever approached them in their pressing needs. Their benevolence and their fame live for ever. This is what Tiruvalluvar means when he points out that he alone lives forever who is alive to the crying needs of the people and helps accordingly; he who is devoid of the charm of benevolence is said to be dead though alive.[222] This is quite true when wealth gets concentrated in the hands of a miser, it neither helps the people nor even the miser. Though the miser lives, yet by the virtue of the fact that his possessions are

beneficial to nobody so he deserves to be mentioned as dead. On the other hand, when wealth grows in volume in the hands of the noble and wise, then it is useful and helpful to all those who are in need of. Tiruvalluvar compares the riches of the wealthy with that of a lake filled with water in a village. Behold how the waters lap on the lovely shores of a lake to the delight of the villager; like unto it are the riches of the wise that helps all people without any expectation whatsoever.[223]

Tiruvalluvar makes yet another forward step when he compares the riches of the wise to that of a shady tree borne with flowers and fruits. It is said that the wealth of a generous person is like a shady tree that bends with the weight of its furits accessible to all the passers by.[224] As a matter of fact such trees borne with fruits help not only human beings but also the birds and other insects quenching their hunger. However there are trees well grown but do not bear with flowers or even fruits. Even then their healthy growth indicates of their proportionate distribution of requisite energy to every part. Tiruvalluvar employs as an analogy even this natural process of the healthy growth of trees. For he points out that the possessions of a benevolent and noble heart of the wealthy are like an unfailing tree which breathes out from every leaf an healing balm to all that gather round.[225]

When there is the proportionate harmony of wealth and nobility of heart, it is allright. Suppose, there is only one aspect present, namely the nobility of heart. This is not just a supposition for, it is realism since in the practical life, even generous minded persons stand aloof due to their poverty. Tiruvalluvar makes no secrecy about it. He comes out with clarity of view defending the moral necessity of idealism apart from realism. For it is said that persons conscientious of their virtuous duty never fail in their offices of tenderness even when fortune is at her lowest ebb.[226] However, the Tamil sage points out that the

poverty of the wise is nothing but the sense of regret of its inability to extend the hand of fellowship in the hour of need.[227] The charm of idealism is so great that even Tiruvalluvar as he is a realist cannot easily escape or ignore. That is why he proclaims that the ruin which springs from the act of benevolence is a jewel of such rare device that is worth purchasing even by going into the bonds of slavery.[228] It is not without spiritual value that that statement is made. For Tiruvalluvar hastens to add that a lovelier and a better thing than the benevolent heart could rarely be found either in the world of humanity or in the worlds of divinity.[229]

CHARITY

It is a well known maxim that charity begins at home. That is why we have seen how Tiruvalluvar has attended rather meticulously to the virtues and duties of the householder. When the householder is fortunate to possess wisdom and wealth as he ought to have through the practices of moral virtues, then it is his moral responsibility to be charitable in word and deed, particularly towards the poor. That is what Tiruvalluvar means when he points out that to relieve the consuming hunger of the poor is itself sufficient riches that the wise could proudly garner up for their safety and security of salvation.[230] The spiritual superiority of the act of charity is further explained. It is said that the greatest conquest of an ascetic is his conquest over the pangs of hunger; but mightier than that feat is that of the householder, who appeases through charity the hunger of others.[231] Such is the nobility of the family order of life, that the householder feeds not only his kith and kin but also the guests and pilgrims who seek shelter under his roof. Such a noble person shall never be the victim of poverty or hunger. For the Tamil sage points out that deadly hunger touches not him, who always shares his bread with others.[232] In his charitable act of sharing, he has a joy that is unique. For behold the barren heart that greedily piles up wealth and perishes in the dust, certainly it knows not the spiritual feeling of relieving the wretchedness of the poor.[233]

We have already seen how Tiruvalluvar has not ignored to recognise the importance of wealth as the sustainer of life. However, the Tamil sage does not favour wealth greedily accumulated. For this kind of accumulation, as practised by the miser, helps nobody. In fact, it creates serious problems like

nflation and the consequences of economic crises in the society leading towards starvation and poverty. This is why it is condemned. For it is said that bitterer than the crumbs of bread gathered at other men's doors is the frugal food of the miser, who eats all alone and yet his mind panting for wealth ever more.[234] This kind of a wretched life is nothing but a death trap. For Tiruvalluvar opines that more poignant than death is the pang of an heart that fails to respond to the tender acts of charity.[235]

According to Tiruvalluvar the performance of charitable acts are the natural dispositions of the noble and wise. For the noble beg not at other men's doors, crying, "I have nought"; nor do they shut their gates for giving alms.[236] Such noble souls help others even without being asked. This could be gauged from the smiling faces helped. For to bear the tale of woe of a beggar is wretched indeed; yet the bountiful heart knows no gladness until it perceives the joy of contentment sparkling through the eyes of suppliant.[237] Tiruvalluvar makes the most sensitive observation on charity. He says of giving alms to the needy and poor alone is charity; other forms of gift are motivated for securing selfish benefits.[238] However, the Tamil sage does not give up idealism. For he points out how it is heinous to beg, though it may lead to heaven; yet to give alms is nobler, even though heaven may be denied.[239]

GLORY

The moral order of the family institution acquires spiritual significance through the practices of virtues so far explained. Therefore, according to Tiruvalluvar, the householder achieves perfection in the present life on earth. This is the moral glory for the householder, who has practised the virtues and thereby benefitted in the present life itself. In order to enhance his name and fame, Tiruvalluvar adds certain remarks only for the maintenance and sustenance of the moral victory of the family order of life which is looked upon as the stepping stone for the spiritual salvation. Give alms to the needy and live the virtuous life of glory. Therefore there is no greater gain on earth.[240] For, the theme of all ages is the one song of praise of the glory of those who help, in whatever manner they are capable, in word and deed, the needy and poor.[241]

Thus having realised the small span of human existence on this earth, Tiruvalluvar emphasises the moral necessity on the part of humanity to make a record of their lives in glorious terms by living the virtuous and fruitful life. He points out that out of the ruins and death of the multitudinous ignorant, it is only the wise who establish worthy name and fame for themselves.[242] Therefore there is nothing gained through laziness and indolence which stand as obstacles on the way of achieving glory. Nor is it profitable to quarrel with the ignorant without realising your own weaknesses.[243] For when there is the fullest avenue to acquire glory by living the virtuous life, if it is not utilised through your own folly, how could you blame somebody else? In fact the wise and the noble recognise not those who leave no foot-prints, so to say, on the sands of time in their life on this earth.[244] Thus Tiruvalluvar reminds us howall things bloom and

fade on earth; but the peerless renown and glory of the wise stand for ever.[245] This is why the Tamil sage speaks in unequivocal terms, better to be born covered with glory on earth than never to be born at all.[246]

The sense of seriousness expressd by Tiruvalluvar for the acquisition of glory is not without significance. For it is clearly stated how the glory and significance of human life dim into insignificance before the tread of an inglorious band of men.[247] This is why also it is summed up that alive is the person who is free from reproach. So also dead is the person who lives with neither fame nor a name.[248] Tiruvalluvar, however ends this chapter with a touch of idealism and supernaturalism. For the Tamil sage refers to the traditional view that in the abode of gods, more honoured than the saints are those who have acquired through the virtuous conduct of life, lasting fame and glory on earth.[249]

CHAPTER 4

ASCETIC ORDER OF LIFE

The presence of the ascetics in the order of life of humanity in general is looked upon with spiritual significance. For, by their perfectly disciplined conduct of virtuous life, they shed lustre to the moral significance of life. They stand as models of divinity and thus inspire humanity to live the life of divinity. It is in that perspective, Tiruvalluvar pays the highest tributes to the ascetic order of life. For it is said how all the scriptures of the world sing in praise of the glory of the realised and perfected personalities of divinity by the virtue of their disciplined conduct of life.[250] Their glory that penetrates and pervades throughout the length and breath of this world of ours, lies in the fact that they have realised the meaning of human life; having realised it, have also shown the righteous path towards the spiritual life of salvation.[251]

Hailing the spiritual superiority of the ascetics, Tiruvalluvar brings home to us of their easy access to the secrets of Nature. For it is pointed out how the infinite book of the secrets of Nature is open only to those who are endowed with the mastery over the five sense particulars namely, touch, taste, sight, sound and smell.[252] The ascetics are not only capable of grasping the secrets of Nature, but also are able to realise spiritual forces governing the universe. This is possible when they are masters of their sensory experiences. Through self-control, they are enabled to renounce the common experiences of pleasure and pain and thereby acquire the spiritual fitness for realising the everlasting life of eternity. For Tiruvalluvar says verily he is the seed that could flourish in the soil of heavens, who has subdued his rebellious senses with the moral force of free-will[253] The

Tamil sage adds that it is this fact, the ascetics achieve that makes them great souls. Those who do not achieve such feats cannot claim either greatness or glory. For they are small and insignificant compared to the spiritual perfection of the ascetics.[254] Tiruvalluvar does not want to leave the glory of the ascetic without the halo of supernaturalism. For if no human beings could be compared with the greatness of ascetic, there is yet the scope for comparison. In other words, the ascetic, having trained through the practical life of virtuous path is the master of the five-senses; by his spiritual perfection he is the leader of mankind. Therefore he could stand in comparison with the leader of gods, namely Indra.[256]

Tiruvalluvar further explains the greatness of the living sages. They inspire the society around them and thus guide them along the righteous path. This is what Tiruvalluvar means when he says that the greatness of sages of wisdom is known by their mighty words and deeds, which act like the spell of a new prophecy and thus shape the destinies of humanity.[256] Such eminent souls of living examples rarely entertain wrath or anger. Yet the dangerous consequences of such acts are beyond our imagination. For the wrath of these, who stand secure on the mountain heights of virtue, though lasting for a second, is so terrible in their consequences that humanity could hardly resist.[257] Through this observation Tiruvalluvar makes this point clearer that it will not be in the interest of the welfare of humanity either to ignore or to insult the sanest counsels of spiritual masters. For they could know more of the world, namely of the present as well as the future aspects of our life than any ordinary person could understand in a given situation. Therefore it is the moral resposibility of humanity to listen to the sanest words of the perfected personalities of virtue and compassion. They are the citizens of the world. They become the citizens of the world by the fact of virtues realised and perfected through the moral path of righteousness. Tiruvalluvar gives

a designation for the citizens of the world. It is the virtuous that are called Anthanar; for it is they who practise and preach kindness and compassion to all living beings in the world.[258] It is worthy to note the universal outlook of Tiruvalluvar. For he keeps the avenue of becoming the citizens of the world to all human beings by the virtue of their noble words and deeds. In a way it is only to enable them the moral orders of life are expounded by Tiruvalluvar. The religious path of moral virtues when faithfully followed, then it establishes the universal outlook of love and compassion to all beings. Such noble souls are few in the history of mankind. That is why their glory is beyond description. This is why Tiruvalluvar also points out we may better count the number of dead; but we cannot count the greatness of the citizens of the world.[259]

CHAPTER 5

UNIVERSAL OUTLOOK OF TIRUVALLUVAR

The term religion is derived from the Latin word, Re-ligare. It means binding or tieing. When it is applied to man, it means that by nature, man as a thinking being seeks to be protected by some such power other than human powers. In other words to be religious is the natural tendency of man and woman. The beginning of religious ideas may be crude enough to be based on either feelings or emotion. However the time honoured traditions and cultural lives of the people warrant the recognition of the rational basis of religious ideas. It is in that perspective the recognition of supremacy of spiritual Agency-God, over human agencies, acquires significance. And when human actions directed purposively towards better and higher values of life, then life acquires moral significance. As it is a meaningful purposive life on earth, so it claims religious significance.

As a matter of fact, religious life or even life as such should be studied more by practice than by theory. In fact, this is the approach in every pursuit of scientific knowledge and it should be more so in the case of the study of religious life. Unfortunately this vital fact is either ignored or evaded in our times. This is evident from the fact that every one wants to learn religion only through reading books without any amount of effort directed to the practices of what has been learnt. Unless learning and practising go together the benefits will be incomplete whether it is for man and woman in particular or for humanity as a whole in general.

The life and conduct envisaged by Tiruvalluvar rectifies the one-sidedness of modern approaches towards the acquisition of knowledge. In other words, emphasis is laid on practice as well as theorisation. That is why, life is viewed as a whole rather than part by part studied. Only when we take into account of the totality of either an individual life or of the life of humanity as such, we are able to perceive the meaningfulness of life. Particularly human life cannot, nay should not be taken as an accident! For man is a thinking being and capable of reflection and imagination. When these mental processes are properly developed along the time-honoured traditions and cultural institutions of society, then man realises not only his inherent rationality but also spirituality. He realises that his well-being lies in the well-being of the society and at large of mankind as a whole. Therefore to conduct his life in such a manner that he promotes the welfare of all, is a moral necessity on the part of all rational beings. It is on the basis of such a principle, man and woman have to live and procreate, and thereby realise the meaningfulness of their lives. Hence is the necessity of recognising certain moral principles which could guide their lives along the path of common good towards the better and the best kinds of life.

Thus we realise how moral principles are essential for the welfare of men and women and religion is the backbone, so to say, of morals. Therefore even the simple moral principles will lose their strength if religion is overlooked. Fear of God is essential for maintenance of peace and order among societies. In order that social equilibrium be maintained religious bias should be cultivated. For all the great religions of the world proclaim the truth, God is supreme and all human endeavours could be sensible and meaningful only when they are directed towards Him. It is in that universal perspective the Tamil sage, Tiruvalluvar has construed his noble creation, Tirukkural, wherein we find an appeal to the rationality of man and woman to lead

he virtuous path of life, not just to live but to live well, as citizens of the world! When every rational being realises this sublime truth, then there is salvation to him as well as to humanity. This spiritual message was given by Tiruvalluvar twenty centuries ago. An identical message has arisen after twenty centuries from the wisdom of Mahatma Gandhi: "A truly religious person becomes a citizen of the world, but the service of one's own country is the stepping stone to the service of humanity. And where service is rendered to the country consistently with the welfare of the world, it finally leads to self-realisation."

REFERENCES

12 Aram, Porul, Inbam — அறம், பொருள், இன்பம்.

13 Aram, Porul,Inbam and Veedu—அறம், பொருள், இன்பம், வீடு.

14 Sangappalakai — சங்கப்பலகை.

15 ‘ கடுகைத் துளைத்தேழ் கடலைப் புகட்டிக்
குறுகத் தறித்த குறள் ’ —இடைக்காடர்

16 ‘ அணுவைத் துளைத்தேழ் கடலைப் புகட்டிக்
குறுகத் தறித்த குறள் ’ —ஔவையார்

17 ‘ ஆயிரத்து முந்நூற்று முப்ப தருங்குறளும்
பாயிரத்தி னோடு பகர்ந்தபின்—போயொருத்தர்
வாய்க் கேட்க நூலுளவோ மன்னு தமிழ்ப்புலவ
ராய்க் கேட்க வீற்றிருக்கலாம் ’ —நத்தத்தனார்

18 Tirukkural No. 1.

அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம் ஆதி
பகவன் முதற்றே உலகு.

19 No. 391.

கற்க கசடறக் கற்பவை கற்றபின்
நிற்க அதற்குத் தக.

20 No. 2.

கற்றதனா லாய பயனென்கொல் வாலறிவன்
நற்றாள் தொழார் எனின்.

21 No. 3.

மலர்மிசை ஏகினான் மாணடி சேர்ந்தார்
நிலமிசை நீடுவாழ் வார்.

22 No. 4.

வேண்டுதல் வேண்டாமை இலான் அடிசேர்ந்தார்க்கு
யாண்டும் இடும்பை இல.

23 Tirukkural No. 5.

இருள்சேர் இருவினையும் சேரா இறைவன்
பொருள்சேர் புகழ்புரிந்தார் மாட்டு.

24 No. 7.

தனக்குவமை இல்லாதான் தாள் சேர்ந்தார்க்கல்லால்
மனக் கவலை மாற்றல் அரிது.

25 No. 6.

பொறிவாயில் ஐந்தவித்தான் பொய்தீர் ஒழுக்க
நெறிநின்றார் நீடு வாழ்வார்.

26 No. 8.

அறவாழி அந்தணன் தாள் சேர்ந்தார்க்கல்லால்
புறவாழி நீந்தல் அரிது.

27 No. 9.

கோளில் பொறியிற் குணமிலவே எண்குணத்தான்
தாளை வணங்காத் தலை.

28 இறைவன்

29 No. 10.

பிறவிப் பெருங்கடல் நீந்துவர் நீந்தார்
இறைவன் அடிசேரா தார்.

30 No. 31.

சிறப்புஈனும் செல்வமும்ஈனும் அறத்தினூஉங்கு
ஆக்கம் எவனோ உயிர்க்கு.

31 No. 32.

அறத்தினூஉங்கு ஆக்கமும்இல்லை அதனை
மறத்தலின் ஊங்கில்லை கேடு.

32 No. 33.

ஒல்லும் வகையான் அறவினை ஓவாதே
செல்லும்வா யெல்லாஞ் செயல்.

33 No. 34.

மனத்துக்கண் மாசிலன் ஆதல் அனைத்துஅறன்
ஆகுல நீர பிற.

34 Tirukkural No. 35.

அழுக்காறு அவாவெகுளி இன்னாச்சொல் நான்கும்
இழுக்கா இயன்றது அறம்.

35 No. 36.

அன்றறிவாம் என்னாது அறஞ்செய்க மற்றது
பொன்றுங்கால் பொன்றாத் துணை.

36 No. 37.

அறத்தாறு இதுவென வேண்டா சிவிகை
பொறுத்தானோடு ஊர்ந்தான் இடை.

37 No. 38.

வீழ்நாள் படாஅமை நன்றாற்றின் அஃதொருவன்
வாழ்நாள் வழியடைக்குங் கல்.

38 No. 39.

அறத்தான் வருவதே இன்பமற்றெல்லாம்
புறத்த புகழும் இல.

39 No. 40.

செயற்பால தோரும் அறனே ஒருவற்கு
உயற்பால தோரும் பழி.

40 No. 11.

வான்நின்று உலகம் வழங்கி வருதலால்
தான் அமிழ்தம் என்றுணரற் பாற்று.

41 No. 12.

துப்பார்க்குத் துப்பாய துப்பாக்கித் துப்பார்க்குத்
துப்பாய தூஉம் மழை.

42 No. 13.

விண்இன்று பொய்ப்பின் விரிநீர் வியனுலகத்து
உள்நின்று உடற்றும் பசி.

43 Tirukkural No. 14.

ஏரின் உழாஅர் உழவர் புயலென்னும்
வாரி வளங்குன்றிக் கால்.

44 No. 15.

கெடுப்பதூஉங் கெட்டார்க்குச் சார்வாய்மற்றாங்கே
எடுப்பதூஉம் எல்லாம் மழை.

45 No. 17.

நெடுங்கடலும் தன்னீர்மை குன்றும் தடிந்தெழிலி
தான் நல்கா தாகி விடின்.

46 No. 16.

விசும்பின் துளிவீழின் அல்லால்மற்றாங்கே
பசும்புல் தலை காண்பு அரிது.

47 No. 18.

சிறப்பொடு பூசனை செல்லாது வானம்
வறக்குமேல் வானோர்க்கும் ஈண்டு.

48 No. 19.

தானம் தவம் இரண்டும் தங்கா வியன்உலகம்
வானம் வழங்கா தெனின்.

49 No. 20.

நீர்இன்று அமையாது உலகெனின் யார்யார்க்கும்
வான்இன்று அமையாது ஒழுக்கு.

50 No, 41.

இல்வாழ்வான் என்பான் இயல்புடைய மூவர்க்கும்
நல்லாற்றின் நின்ற துணை.

51 No. 42.

துறந்தார்க்கும் துவ்வாதவர்க்கும் இறந்தார்க்கும்
இல்வாழ்வான் என்பான் துணை.

52 Tirukkural No. 43.

தென்புலத்தார் தெய்வம் விருந்தொக்கல் தானென்றாங்கு
ஐம்புலத்தாறு ஓம்பல் தலை.

53 No. 44.

பழியஞ்சிப் பாத்தூண் உடைத்தாயின் வாழ்க்கை
வழியெஞ்சல் எஞ்ஞான்றும் இல்

54 No. 45.

அன்பும் அறனும் உடைத்தாயின் இல்வாழ்க்கை
பண்பும் பயனும் அது.

55 No. 46.

அறத்தாற்றின் இல்வாழ்க்கை யாற்றின் புறத்தாற்றிற்
போஒய்ப் பெறுவது எவன்.

56 No. 47.

இயல்பினான் இல்வாழ்க்கை வாழ்பவன் என்பான்
முயல்வாருள் எல்லாம் தலை.

57 No. 48.

ஆற்றின் ஒழுக்கி அறனிழுக்கா இல்வாழ்க்கை
நோற்பாரின் நோன்மை உடைத்து.

58 No. 49.

அறனெனப் பட்டதே இல்வாழ்க்கை அஃதும்
பிறன்பழிப்பது இல்லாயின் நன்று.

59 No. 50.

வையத்துள் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்பவன் வானுறையும்
தெய்வத்துள் வைக்கப்படும்.

60 No. 51.

மனைத்தக்க மாண்புடையவள் ஆகித்தற் கொண்டான்
வளத்தக்காள் வாழ்க்கைத் துணை.

61 Tirukkural No. 54.

பெண்ணிற் பெருந்தக்க யாவுள கற்பென்னும்
திண்மை யுண்டாகப் பெறின்.

62 No. 52.

மனைமாட்சி இல்லாள்கண் இல்லாயின் வாழ்க்கை
எனைமாட்சித் தாயினும் இல்.

63 No. 53.

இல்லதென் இல்லவள் மாண்பானால் உள்ளதென்
இல்லவள் மாணாக் கடை.

64 No. 56.

தற்காத்துத் தற்கொண்டாற் பேணித் தகைசான்ற
சொற்காத்துச் சோர்விலாள் பெண்.

65 No. 55.

தெய்வந் தொழாஅள் கொழுநன் தொழுதெழுவாள்
பெய்யெனப் பெய்யும் மழை.

66 No. 57.

சிறைகாக்குங் காப்பெவன் செய்யும் மகளிர்
நிறைகாக்குங் காப்பே தலை.

67 No. 59.

புகழ்புரிந்த இல்லிலோர்க்கு இல்லை இகழ்வார்முன்
ஏறுபோல் பீடு நடை.

68 No. 58.

பெற்றான் பெறின் பெறுவர் பெண்டிர் பெருஞ்சிறப்புப்
புத்தேளிர் வாழும் உலகு.

69 No. 60

மங்கலம் என்ப மனைமாட்சி மற்றுஅதன்
நன்கலம் நன்மக்கட் பேறு.

70 Tirukkural No. 61.

பெறுமவற்றுள் யாமறிவது இல்லை அறிவறிந்த
மக்கட்பேறு அல்ல பிற.

71 No. 65.

மக்கள்மெய் தீண்டல் உடற்கின்பம் மற்றுஅவர்
சொற்கேட்டல் இன்பம் செவிக்கு.

72 No. 66.

குழல்இனிது யாழ்இனிது என்ப தம்மக்கள்
மழலைச்சொல் கேளா தவர்.

73 No. 64.

அமிழ்தினும் ஆற்ற இனிதே தம்மக்கள்
சிறுகை அளாவிய கூழ்.

74 No. 67.

தந்தை மகற்கு ஆற்றும்நன்றி அவையத்து
முந்தி இருப்பச் செயல்.

75 No. 70.

மகன்தந்தைக்கு ஆற்றும் உதவி இவன்தந்தை
என்நோற்றான் கொல்எனுஞ் சொல்.

76 No. 69.

ஈன்ற பொழுதிற் பெரிதுவக்கும் தன்மகனைச்
சான்றோன் எனக்கேட்ட தாய்.

77 No. 68.

தம்மின்தம் மக்கள் அறிவுடைமை மாநிலத்து
மன்னுயிர்க் கெல்லாம் இனிது.

78 No. 62.

எழுபிறப்பும் தீயவை தீண்டா பழிபிறங்காப்
பண்புடை மக்கட் பெறின்.

79 Tirukkural No. 63.

தம்பொருள் என்ப தம்மக்கள் அவர்பொருள்
தம்தம் வினையான் வரும்.

80 No. 71.

அன்பிற்கும் உண்டோ அடைக்குந்தாள் ஆர்வலர்
புன்கண்ணீர் பூசல் தரும்.

81 No. 72.

அன்பிலார் எல்லாந் தமக்குரியர் அன்புடையார்
என்பும் உரியர் பிறர்க்கு.

82 No. 74.

அன்புஈனும் ஆர்வம் உடைமை அதுஈனும்
நண்பென்னும் நாடாச் சிறப்பு.

83 No. 76.

அறத்திற்கே அன்புசார் பென்ப அறியார்
மறத்திற்கும் அஃதே துணை.

84 No. 75.

அன்புற்று அமர்ந்த வழக்கென்ப வையகத்து
இன்புற்றார் எய்துஞ் சிறப்பு.

85 No. 78.

அன்பகத் தில்லா உயிர்வாழ்க்கை வன்பாற்கண்
வற்றல் மரந்தளிர்த் தற்று.

86 No. 77.

என்பி லதனை வெயில்போலக் காயுமே
அன்பி லதனை அறம்.

87 No. 79.

புறத்துறுப் பெல்லாம் எவன்செய்யும் யாக்கை
அகத்துறுப்பு அன்பி லவர்க்கு.

88 Tirukkural No. 80.

அன்பின் வழியது உயிர்நிலை அஃதில்லார்க்கு
என்புதோல் போர்த்த உடம்பு.

89 No. 73.

அன்போடு இயைந்த வழக்கென்ப ஆருயிர்க்கு
என்போடு இயைந்த தொடர்பு.

90 No. 81.

இருந்தோம்பி இல்வாழ்வ தெல்லாம் விருந்தோம்பி
வேளாண்மை செய்தற் பொருட்டு.

91 No. 84.

அகனமர்ந்து செய்யாள் உறையும் முகனமர்ந்து
நல்விருந்து ஓம்புவான் இல்.

92 No. 83.

வருவிருந்து வைகலும் ஓம்புவான் வாழ்க்கை
பருவத்து பாழ்படுத லின்று.

93 No, 85.

வித்தும் இடல்வேண்டுங் கொல்லோ விருந்தோம்பி
மிச்சில் மிசைவான் புலம்.

94 No. 82.

விருந்து புறத்ததாத் தானுண்டல் சாவா
மருந்தெனினும் வேண்டற்பாற் றன்று.

95 No. 86.

செல்விருந்து ஓம்பி வருவிருந்து பார்த்திருப்பான்
நல்விருந்து வானத் தவர்க்கு.

96 No. 87.

இனைத்துணைத் தென்பதொன்றில்லை விருந்தின்
துணைத்துணை வேள்விப் பயன்.

97 Tirukkural No. 88.

பரிந்தோம்பிப் பற்றற்றேம் என்பர் விருந்தோம்பி
வேள்வி தலைப் படாதார்.

98 No. 89.

உடைமையுள் இன்மை விருந்தோம்பல் ஓம்பா
மடமை மடவார்கண் உண்டு.

99 No. 90.

மோப்பக் குழையும் அனிச்சம் முகந்திரிந்து
நோக்கக் குழையும் விருந்து.

100 No. 92.

அகனமர்ந்து ஈதலின் நன்றே முகனமர்ந்து
இன்சொல னாகப் பெறின்.

101 No. 93.

முகத்தான் அமர்ந்து இனிது நோக்கி அகத்தானாம்
இன்சொ லினதே அறம்.

102 No. 94.

துன்புறூஉந் துவ்வாமை இல்லாகும் யார்மாட்டும்
இன்புறூஉம் இன்சொ லவர்க்கு.

103 No. 95.

பணிவுடையன் இன்சொலன் ஆதல் ஒருவற்கு
அணியல்ல மற்றுப் பிற.

104 No. 96.

அல்லவை தேய அறம்பெருகும் நல்லவை
நாடி இனிய சொலின்.

105 No. 97.

நயன்ஈன்று நன்றி பயக்கும் பயன்ஈன்று
பண்பின் தலைப்பிரியாச் சொல்.

106 Tirukkural No. 98.

சிறுமையுள் நீங்கிய இன்சொல் மறுமையும்
இம்மையும் இன்பம் தரும்.

107 No. 99.

இன்சொல் இனிதீன்றல் காண்பான் எவன்கொலோ
வன்சொல் வழங்கு வது.

108 No. 100.

இனிய உளவாக இன்னாத கூறல்
கனியிருப்பக் காய்கவர்ந் தற்று.

109 No. 91.

இன்சொலால் ஈரம் அளைஇப் படிறு இலவாஞ்
செம்பொருள் கண்டார் வாய்ச்சொல்.

110 No. 101.

செய்யாமற் செய்த உதவிக்கு வையகமும்
வானகமும் ஆற்ற லரிது.

111 No. 103.

பயன்தூக்கார் செய்த உதவி நயன்தூக்கின்
நன்மை கடலிற் பெரிது.

112 No. 102.

காலத்தி னாற்செய்த நன்றி சிறிதெனினும்
ஞாலத்தின் மாணப் பெரிது.

113 No. 105.

உதவி வரைத்தன்று உதவி உதவி
செயப்பட்டார் சால்பின் வரைத்து.

114 No. 104.

தினைத்துணை நன்றி செயினும் பனைத்துணையாகக்
கொள்வர் பயன் தெரிவார்.

115 Tirukkural No. 108.

நன்றி மறப்பது நன்றன்று நன்றல்லது
அன்றே மறப்பது நன்று.

116 No. 109.

கொன்றன்ன இன்னா செயினும் அவர்செய்த
ஒன்றுநன்று உள்ளக் கெடும்.

117 No. 110.

எந்நன்றி கொன்றார்க்கும் உய்வுண்டாம் உய்வில்லை
செய்ந்நன்றி கொன்ற மகற்கு.

118 No. 107.

எழுமை எழுபிறப்பும் உள்ளுவர் தங்கண்
விழுமந் துடைத்தவர் நட்பு.

119 No. 106.

மறவற்க மாசற்றார் கேண்மை துறவற்க
துன்பத்துள் துப்பாயார் நட்பு.

120 No. 111.

தகுதி எனவொன்று நன்றே பகுதியால்
பாற்பட்டு ஒழுகப் பெறின்.

121 No. 120.

வாணிகஞ் செய்வார்க்கு வாணிகம் பேணிப்
பிறவுந் தமபோற் செயின்.

122 No. 113.

நன்றே தரினும் நடுவிகந்தாம் ஆக்கத்தை
அன்றே ஒழிய விடல்.

123 No. 112.

செப்பம் உடையவன் ஆக்கஞ் சிதைவின்றி
எச்சத்திற் கேமாப்பு உடைத்து.

124 Tirukkural No. 114.

தக்கார் தகவிலர் என்பது அவரவர்
எச்சத்தாற் காணப் படும்.

125 No. 115.

கேடும் பெருக்கமும் இல்லல்ல நெஞ்சத்துக்
கோடாமை சான்றோர்க் கணி

126 No. 117.

கெடுவாக வையாது உலகம் நடுவாக
நன்றிக்கண் தங்கியான் தாழ்வு.

127 No. 116.

கெடுவல்யான் என்பது அறிகதன் நெஞ்சம்
நடுஒரீஇ அல்ல செயின்.

128 No. 119.

சொற்கோட்டம் இல்லது செப்பம் ஒருதலையா
உட்கோட்டம் இன்மை பெறின்.

129 No. 118.

சமன்செய்து சீர்தூக்குங் கோல்போல் அமைந்தொருபால்
கோடாமை சான்றோர்க் கணி.

130 No. 127.

யாகாவாராயினும் நாகாக்க காவாக்கால்
சோகாப்பர் சொல்லிழுக்குப் பட்டு.

131 No. 129.

தீயினாற் சுட்டபுண் உள்ளாறும் ஆறாதே
நாவினாற் சுட்ட வடு.

132 No. 128.

ஒன்றானும் தீச்சொல் பொருட்பயன் உண்டாயின்
நன்றாகா தாகி விடும்.

133 Tirukkural No. 130.

கதங்காத்துக் கற்றடங்கல் ஆற்றுவான் செவ்வி
அறம்பார்க்கும் ஆற்றின் நுழைந்து.

134 No. 126.

ஒருமையுள் ஆமைபோல் ஐந்தடக்கல் ஆற்றின்
எழுமையும் ஏமாப் புடைத்து.

135 No. 122.

காக்க பொருளா அடக்கத்தை ஆக்கம்
அதனினூஉங் கில்லை உயிர்க்கு.

136 No. 124.

நிலையில் திரியாது அடங்கியான் தோற்றம்
மலையினும் மாணப் பெரிது.

137 No. 125.

எல்லார்க்கும் நன்றாம் பணிதல் அவருள்ளும்
செல்வர்க்கே செல்வந் தகைத்து.

138 No. 123.

செறிவறிந்து சீர்மை பயக்கும் அறிவறிந்து
ஆற்றின் அடங்கப் பெறின்.

139 No. 121.

அடக்கம் அமரருள் உய்க்கும் அடங்காமை
ஆரிருள் உய்த்து விடும்.

140 No. 135.

அழுக்கா றுடையான்கண் ஆக்கம்போன்று இல்லை
ஒழுக்க மிலான்கண் உயர்வு.

141 No. 137.

ஒழுக்கத்தின் எய்துவர் மேன்மை இழுக்கத்தின்
எய்துவர் எய்தாப் பழி.

142 Tirukkural No. 136.

ஒழுக்கத்தின் ஒல்கார் உரவோர் இழுக்கத்தின்
ஏதம் படுபாக் கறிந்து.

143 No. 138.

நன்றிக்கு வித்தாகும் நல்லொழுக்கம் தீயொழுக்கம்
என்றும் இடும்பை தரும்.

144 No. 139.

ஒழுக்க முடையவர்க்கு ஒல்லாவே தீய
வழுக்கியும் வாயாற் சொலல்.

145 No. 131.

ஒழுக்கம் விழுப்பம் தரலான் ஒழுக்கம்
உயிரினும் ஓம்பப் படும்.

146 No. 132.

பரிந்தோம்பிக் காக்க ஒழுக்கம் தெரிந்தோம்பித்
தேரினும் அஃதே துணை.

147 No. 133.

ஒழுக்கம் உடைமை குடிமை இழுக்கம்
இழிந்த பிறப்பாய் விடும்.

148 No. 134.

மறப்பினும் ஓத்துக் கொளலாகும் பார்ப்பான்
பிறப்பொழுக்கங் குன்றக் கெடும்.

149 No. 140.

உலகத்தோடு ஒட்ட ஒழுகல் பலகற்றும்
கல்லார் அறிவிலா தார்.

150 No. 141.

பிறன்பொருளாள் பெட்டொழுகும் பேதைமை ஞாலத்து
அறம்பொருள் கண்டார்கண் இல்.

151 Tirukkural No. 142.

அறன்கடை நின்றாருள் எல்லாம் பிறன்கடை
நின்றாரின் பேதையார் இல்.

152 No. 144.

எனைத்துணையர் ஆயினும் என்னாம் தினைத்துணையும்
தேரான் பிறனில் புகல்.

153 No. 143.

விளிந்தாரின் வேறல்லர் மன்ற தெளிந்தாரில்
தீமை புரிந்து ஒழுகுவார்.

154 No. 145.

எளிதென இல்லிறப்பான் எய்துமெஞ்ஞான்றும்
விளியாது நிற்கும் பழி.

155 No. 146.

பகை பாவம் அச்சம் பழியென நான்கும்
இகவாவாம் இல்லிறப்பான் கண்.

156 No. 147.

அறனியலான் இல்வாழ்வான் என்பான் பிறனியலாள்
பெண்மை நயவா தவன்.

157 No. 148.

பிறன்மனை நோக்காத பேராண்மை சான்றோர்க்கு
அறனொன்றோ ஆன்ற ஒழுக்கு.

158 No. 150.

அறன்வரையான் அல்ல செயினும் பிறன்வரையான்
பெண்மை நயவாமை நன்று.

159 No. 149.

நலக்குரியார் யாரெனின் நாமநீர் வைப்பின்
பிறற்குரியாள் தோள் தோயாதார்.

160 Tirukkural No. 154.

நிறையுடைமை நீங்காமை வேண்டின் பொறையுடைமை
போற்றி ஒழுகப் படும்.

161 No. 153.

இன்மையுள் இன்மை விருந்தொரால் வன்மையுள்
வன்மை மடவார்ப் பொறை.

162 No. 152.

பொறுத்தல் இறப்பினை என்றும் அதனை
மறத்தல் அதனினும் நன்று.

163 No. 151.

அகழ்வாரைத் தாங்கும் நிலம்போலத் தம்மை
இகழ்வார்ப் பொறுத்தல் தலை.

164 No. 156.

ஒறுத்தார்க்கு ஒருநாளை இன்பம் பொறுத்தார்க்குப்
பொன்றுந் துணையும் புகழ்.

165 No. 155.

ஒறுத்தாரை ஒன்றாக வையாரே வைப்பர்
பொறுத்தாரைப் பொன்போற் பொதிந்து.

166 No. 157.

திறனல்ல தற்பிறர் செய்யினும் நோநொந்து
அறனல்ல செய்யாமை நன்று.

167 No, 158.

மிகுதியான் மிக்கவை செய்தாரைத் தாந்தம்
தகுதியான் வென்று விடல்.

168 No. 160.

உண்ணாது நோற்பார் பெரியர் பிறர் சொல்லும்
இன்னாச்சொல் நோற்பாரின் பின்.

169 Tirukkural No. 159.

துறந்தாரின் தூய்மை உடையர் இறந்தார்வாய்
இன்னாச்சொல் நோற்கிற் பவர்.

170 No. 165.

அழுக்காறு உடையார்க்கு அதுசாலும் ஒன்னார்
வழுக்கியும் கேடீன் பது.

171 No. 167.

அவ்வித்து அழுக்காறு உடையானைச் செய்யவள்
தவ்வையைக் காட்டி விடும்.

172 No. 168.

அழுக்காறு எனஒரு பாவி திருச்செற்றுத்
தீயுழி உய்த்து விடும்.

173 No. 166.

கொடுப்பது அழுக்கறுப்பான் சுற்றம் உடுப்பதூஉம்
உண்பதூஉம் இன்றிக் கெடும்.

174 No. 163.

அறன்ஆக்கம் வேண்டாதான் என்பான் பிறனாக்கம்
பேணாது அழுக்கறுப் பான்.

175 No. 164.

அழுக்காற்றின் அல்லவை செய்யார் இழுக்காற்றின்
ஏதம் படுபாக்கு அறிந்து.

176 No. 170.

அழுக்கற்று அகன்றாரும் இல்லை அஃது இல்லார்
பெருக்கத்தில் தீர்ந்தாரும் இல்.

177 No. 169.

அவ்விய நெஞ்சத்தான் ஆக்கமுஞ் செவ்வியான்
கேடும் நினைக்கப் படும்.

178 Tirukkural No. 161.

ஒழுக்காறாக் கொள்க ஒருவன்தன் நெஞ்சத்து
அழுக்காறு இலாத இயல்பு.

179 No. 162.

விழுப்பேற்றின் அஃதொப்பது இல்லையார் மாட்டும்
அழுக்காறு இலாத இயல்பு.

180 No. 175.

அஃகி அகன்ற அறிவென்னாம் யார்மாட்டும்
வெஃகி வெறிய செயின்.

181 No. 177.

வேண்டற்க வெஃகியாம் ஆக்கம் விளைவயின்
மாண்டற் கரிதாம் பயன்.

182 No. 178.

அஃகாமை செல்வத்திற்கு யாதெனின் வெஃகாமை
வேண்டும் பிறன்கைப் பொருள்.

183 No. 179.

அறனறிந்து வெஃகா அறிவுடையார்ச் சேரும்
திறன்அறிந் தாங்கே திரு.

184 No. 173.

சிற்றின்பம் வெஃகி அறனல்ல செய்யாரே
மற்றின்பம் வேண்டு பவர்.

185 No. 174.

இலமென்று வெஃகுதல் செய்யார் புலம்வென்ற
புன்மையில் காட்சி யவர்.

186 No. 176.

அருள்வெஃகி ஆற்றின்கண் நின்றான் பொருள்வெஃகிப்
பொல்லாத சூழக் கெடும்.

187 Tirukkural No. 180.

இறல்ஈனும் எண்ணாது வெஃகின் விறல் ஈனும்
வேண்டாமை என்னுஞ் செருக்கு.

188 No. 171.

நடுவின்றி நன்பொருள் வெஃகின் குடிபோன்றிக்
குற்றமும் ஆங்கே தரும்.

189 No. 172.

படுபயன் வெஃகிப் பழிப்படுவ செய்யார்
நடுவன்மை நாணு பவர்.

190 No. 185.

அறஞ்சொல்லும் நெஞ்சத்தான் அன்மை புறஞ்சொல்லும்
புன்மையாற் காணப் படும்.

191 No. 186.

பிறன்பழி கூறுவான் தன்பழி யுள்ளும்
திறன் தெரிந்து கூறப்படும்.

192 No. 187.

பகச்சொல்லிக் கேளிர்ப் பிரிப்பர் நகச்சொல்லி
நட்பாடல் தேற்றா தவர்.

193 No. 188.

துன்னியார் குற்றமும் தூற்றும் மரபினார்
என்னைகொல் ஏதிலார் மாட்டு,

194 No. 184.

கண்ணின்று கண்ணறச் சொல்லினும் சொல்லற்க
முன்இன்று பின்நோக்காச் சொல்.

195 No. 181.

அறங்கூறான் அல்லசெயினும் ஒருவன்
புறங்கூறான் என்றல் இனிது.

196 Tirukkural No. 182.

அறனழீஇ அல்லவை செய்தலின் தீதே
புறனழீஇப் பொய்த்து நகை.

197 No. 183.

புறங்கூறிப் பொய்த்துயிர் வாழ்தலின் சாதல்
அறங்கூறும் ஆக்கந் தரும்.

198 No. 189.

அறன்நோக்கி ஆற்றுங்கொல் வையம் புறன்நோக்கிப்
புன்சொல் உரைப்பான் பொறை.

199 No. 190.

ஏதிலார் குற்றம்போல் தங்குற்றம் காண்கிற்பின்
தீதுண்டோ மன்னும் உயிர்க்கு.

200 No. 194,

நயன்சாரா நன்மையின் நீக்கும் பயன்சாராப்
பண்பில்சொல் பல்லா ரகத்து.

201 No. 193.

நயனிலன் என்பது சொல்லும் பயனில
பாரித் துரைக்கும் உரை.

202 No. 192.

பயனில பல்லார்முன் சொல்லல் நயனில
நட்டார்கண் செய்தலின் தீது,

203 No. 191.

பல்லார் முனியப் பயனில சொல்லுவான்
எல்லாரும் எள்ளப் படும்.

204 No. 195.

சீர்மை சிறப்பொடு நீங்கும் பயனில
நீர்மை யுடையார் சொலின்.

205 Tirukkural No. 196.

பயனில்சொல் பாராட்டுவானை மகன்எனல்
மக்கட் பதடி யெனல்.

206 No. 198.

அரும்பயன் ஆயும் அறிவினார் சொல்லார்
பெரும்பயன் இல்லாத சொல்.

207 No. 197.

நயனில சொல்லினுஞ் சொல்லுக சான்றோர்
பயனில சொல்லாமை நன்று.

208 No. 199.

பொருள்தீர்ந்த பொச்சாந்துஞ் சொல்லார் மருள்தீர்ந்த
மாசறு காட்சி யவர்.

209 No. 200.

சொல்லுக சொல்லிற் பயனுடைய சொல்லற்க
சொல்லிற் பயனிலாச் சொல்.

210 No. 202.

தீயவை தீய பயத்தலால் தீயவை
தீயினும் அஞ்சப் படும்.

211 No. 203.

அறிவினுள் எல்லாந் தலையென்பதீய
செறுவார்க்கும் செய்யா விடல்

212 No. 204.

மறந்தும் பிறன்கேடு சூழற்க சூழின்
அறஞ்சூழும் சூழ்ந்தவன் கேடு.

213 No. 205.

இலன்என்று தீயவை செய்யற்க செய்யின்
இலனாகும் மற்றும் பெயர்த்து.

214 Tirukkural No. 201.

தீவினையார் அஞ்சார் விழுமியார் அஞ்சுவர்
தீவினை என்னுஞ் செருக்கு.

215 No. 207.

எனைப்பகை யுற்றாரும் உய்வர் வினைப்பகை
வீயாது பின்சென்று அடும்.

216 No. 208.

தீயவை செய்தார் கெடுதல் நிழல்தன்னை
வீயாது அடிஉறைந் தற்று.

217 No. 206.

தீப்பால தான்பிறர்கண் செய்யற்க நோய்ப்பால
தன்னை அடல்வேண்டா தான்.

218 No. 209.

தன்னைத்தான் காதலனாயின் எனைத்தொன்றும்
துன்னற்க தீவினைப் பால்.

219 No. 210.

அருங்கேடன் என்பது அறிக மருங்கோடித்
தீவினை செய்யான் எனின்.

220 No. 211.

கைம்மாறு வேண்டா கடப்பாடு மாரிமாட்டு
என்ஆற்றுங் கொல்லோ உலகு.

221 No. 212.

தாளாற்றித் தந்த பொருளெல்லாம் தக்கார்க்கு
வேளாண்மை செய்தற் பொருட்டு.

222 No. 214.

ஒத்த தறிவான் உயிர்வாழ்வான் மற்றையான்
செத்தாருள் வைக்கப் படும்.

223 Tirukkural No. 215.

ஊருணி நீர்நிறைந் தற்றே உலகவாம்
பேரறி வாளன் திரு.

224 No. 216.

பயன்மரம் உள்ளூர்ப் பழுத்தற்றால் செல்வம்
நயனுடைய யான்கண் படின்.

225 No. 217.

மருந்தாகித் தப்பா மரத்தற்றால் செல்வம்
பெருந்தகை யான்கண் படின்.

226 No. 218.

இடனில் பருவத்தும் ஒப்புரவிற்கு ஒல்கார்
கடனறி காட்சி யவர்.

227 No. 219.

நயனுடையான் நல்கூர்ந்தா னாதல் செயும்நீர
செய்யாது அமைகலா வாறு.

228 No. 220.

ஒப்புரவினால்வரும் கேடெனின் அஃதொருவன்
விற்றுக்கோள் தக்க துடைத்து.

229 No. 213.

புத்தே ளுலகத்தும் ஈண்டும் பெறலரிதே
ஒப்புரவின் நல்ல பிற.

230 No. 226.

அற்றார் அழிபசி தீர்த்தல் அஃதொருவன்
பெற்றான் பொருள் வைப் புழி.

231 No. 225.

ஆற்றுவார் ஆற்றல் பசி ஆற்றல் அப்பசியை
மாற்றுவார் ஆற்றலின் பின்.

232 Tirukkural No. 227.

பாத்தூண் மரீஇ யவனைப் பசி என்னும்
தீப்பிணி தீண்டல் அரிது.

233 No. 228.

ஈத்துவக்கும் இன்பம் அறியார்கொல் தாமுடைமை
வைத்திழக்கும் வன்க ணவர்.

234 No. 229.

இரத்தலின் இன்னாது மன்ற நிரப்பிய
தாமே தமியர் உணல்.

235 No. 230.

சாதலின் இன்னாத தில்லை இனிததூஉம்
ஈதல் இயையாக் கடை.

236 No. 223.

இலனென்னும் எவ்வம் உரையாமை ஈதல்
குலனுடையான் கண்ணே உள.

237 No, 224.

இன்னாது இரக்கப்படுதல் இரந்தவர்
இன்முகங் காணும் அளவு.

238 No. 221.

வறியார்க்கொன்று ஈவதே ஈகைமற்றெல்லாம்
குறியெதிர்ப்பை நீர் துடைத்து.

239 No. 222.

நல்லாறு எனினும் கொளல்தீது மேலுலகம்
இல்லெனினும் ஈதலே நன்று.

240 No. 231.

ஈதல் இசைபட வாழ்தல் அதுவல்லது
ஊதியம் இல்லை உயிர்க்கு.

241 Tirukkural No. 232.

உரைப்பார் உரைப்பவை எல்லாம் இரப்பார்க்கொன்று
ஈவார்மேல் நிற்கும் புகழ்.

242 No. 235.

நத்தம்போல் கேடும் உளதாகுஞ் சாக்காடும்
வித்தகர்க் கல்லால் அரிது.

243 No. 237.

புகழ்பட வாழாதார் தந்நோவார் தம்மை
இகழ்வாரை நோவது எவன்.

244 No. 238.

வசையென்ப வையத்தார்க் கெல்லாம் இசையென்னும்
எச்சம் பெறாஅ விடின்.

245 No. 233.

ஒன்றா உலகத்து உயர்ந்த புகழல்லால்
பொன்றாது நிற்பதொன்று இல்.

246 No. 236.

தோன்றின் புகழொடு தோன்றுக அஃதிலார்
தோன்றலின் தோன்றாமை நன்று.

247 No. 239.

வசையிலா வண்பயன் குன்றும் இசையிலா
யாக்கை பொறுத்த நிலம்.

248 No. 240.

வசைஒழிய வாழ்வாரே வாழ்வார் இசையொழிய
வாழ்வாரே வாழா தவர்.

249 No. 234.

நிலவரை நீள்புகழ் ஆற்றின் புலவரைப்
போற்றாது புத்தேள் உலகு.

250 Tirukkural No. 21.

ஒழுக்கத்து நீத்தார் பெருமை விழுப்பத்து
வேண்டும் பனுவல் துணிவு.

251 No. 23.

இருமை வகைதெரிந்து ஈண்டு அறம்பூண்டார்
பெருமை பிறங்கிற்று உலகு.

252 No. 27.

சுவை ஒளி ஊறு ஓசை நாற்றமென்று ஐந்தின்
வகைதெரிவான் கட்டே உலகு.

253 No. 24.

உரனென்னும் தோட்டியான் ஓரைந்தும் காப்பான்
வரனென்னும் வைப்பிற்கோர் வித்து.

254 No. 26.

செயற்கரிய செய்வார் பெரியர் சிறியர்
செயற்கரிய செய்கலா தார்.

255 No. 25.

ஐந்தவித்தான் ஆற்றல் அகல்விசும்புளார் கோமான்
இந்திரனே சாலுங் கரி.

256 No. 28.

நிறைமொழி மாந்தர் பெருமை நிலத்து
மறைமொழி காட்டி விடும்.

257 No. 29.

குணமென்னும் குன்றேறி நின்றார் வெகுளி
கணமேயும் காத்தல் அரிது.

258 No. 30.

அந்தணர் என்போர் அறவோர் மற்றெவ்வுயிர்க்குஞ்
செந்தண்மை பூண்டொழுக லான்.

259 No. 22.

துறந்தார் பெருமை துணைக்கூறின் வையத்து
இறந்தாரை எண்ணிக் கொண்டற்று.

ERRATA

Page	Printed word	Correct word
1	unmistakble	unmistakable
6	affectcd	affected
7	ciass	class
8	mentlon	mention
14	thc	the
15	way	why
16	tife	life
	chaper	chapter
19	possibie	possible
21	expence	expense
	Tlruvalluvar	Tiruvalluvar
22	reighteousness	righteousness
29	hili,	hill.
30	Tiruvalluvar,	Tiruvalluvar.
31	thc	the
32	famiiy	family
36	obeservation	observation
	the the	the
37	fullv	fully
51	achivements	achievements
52	it self	itself
53	cwn	own
	It	it
55	whitout	without
56	mater	matter
	way	why
57	becoms	becomes
58	tonuge	tongue

Page	Printed word	Correct word
61	reeommends	recommends
	of act	of fact
	In fact.	In fact,
77	fruitless talks.	fruitless talks[204]
	men.[204]	men.[205]
81	protection	perfection
86	nflation	inflation
89	breath	breadth
90	Indra.[256]	Indra.[255]
	o	of
93	o	of
94	he	the

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Tolkappiam – Porulatikaram —*by Tolkappiyanar*

II. Sangattamizum Pirkalattamizum —*by Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer.*

III. Ancient and Modern Tamil Poets —*by Maraimalai Adikal.*

IV. The Tamilian Antiquary —*by Dr. G. U. Pope.*

V. Tirukkural Telivurai —*by Dr. M. Varadarasan.*

VI. Mathurai Kanchi –Sangam Work —*by Mankudi Maruthanar.*

VII. Cirupanarruppadai- „ —*by Nallur Natthathanar.*

VIII. Perumpanarruppadai „ —*by Kadiyalur Vuritthirangkannanar.*

IX. Pattina Palai „ „

X. Nedunal Vadai „ —*by Nakkirar.*

XI. Purananuru „ —*by Sangam Poets.*

XII. Silappadikaram —*by Ilango Adikal.*

XIII. Tirukkural —*by Tiruvalluvar.*

At a time when we are confronted with problems of Life, difficult to be solved, here is a Teacher to guide Humanity. Two thousand years ago, he lived in Southern-India. With the deepest concern for Mankind, he wrote a Treatise, comprehensive of all aspects of Life. It was named Tirukkural; and he was named Tiruvalluvar. What he said then is more appropriate now. For, he says Life is not just to live, but to live well! Make your Life meaningfull in pursuing the way of reason and faith shown by Tiruvalluvar.

THE PUBLISHERS

Books are available at:

Higginbothams
Mount Road, Madras-2

South India Saiva Siddhanta Works, Publishing Society (Tinnevelly)
Broadway, Madras-1